OUR LIVING LANGUAGE

HOW TO TEACH IT AND HOW TO USE IT

HOWARD R. DRIGGS

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HOWARD R. DRIGGS

PROFESSOR OF EDUCATION IN ENGLISH,
UNIVERSITY OF UTAH, SALT LAKE CITY.
AUTHOR OF LIVE LANGUAGE LESSONS

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PREFACE

Our living language can best be learned and taught by truly democratic methods and in the truly American spirit.

The methods advocated in this book are the result of a wealth of practical experience. They represent not only the best thoughts of the author, gained during more than a score of years as a student and as a teacher of the subject in grade schools, high schools, normal schools, and colleges, but also the invaluable contributions that have come from hundreds of educational leaders and teachers in all parts of our land.

The effort has been to present this message clearly and concretely. In a series of well-defined chapters, the vital phases of the subject are treated in a simple yet stimulating style. Following each of these practical discussions are an inviting program of round table studies and a series of exercises intended to enable the thoughtful reader to put the suggestions into practice.

The book is especially designed for use in reading circles, in teacher-training courses in high schools, normal schools, and colleges, and in literary organizations. It will be found helpful also for the home and for professional people. Its message is for all who would work for the betterment of our national speech.

The author acknowledges his appreciation of the most generous help and inspiration received from the host of

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pupils, teachers, superintendents, and others with whom he has worked in producing this book.

The following educational leaders, who have made special contributions and suggestions, are remembered individually and with sincere gratitude: Dr. Richard Green Moulton, Professor of Literary Theory and Interpretation, of the University of Chicago; Dr. A. E. Winship, Editor of the Journal of Education, Boston; President John A. Widtsoe, Milton Bennion, Dean of the School of Education, and Leroy E. Cowles, Professor of Education, of the University of Utah; James W. Searson, Professor of English, State Agricultural College, Manhattan, Kansas; Herbert E. Fowler, Professor of English, State Normal School, Lewiston, Idaho; Walter Barnes, Professor of English, State Normal School, Fairmount, West Virginia; R. L. Lyman, Professor of English, University of Chicago School of Education; S. A. Leonard, Head of English Department, Lincoln School, Teachers College, Columbia University; E. E. Lewis, Principal Secondary School, University of Iowa; G. N. Child, State Superintendent of Utah; Mrs. Mary D. Bradford, Superintendent of Schools, Kenosha, Wisconsin; J. H. Beveridge, Superintendent of Schools, Omaha, Nebraska; W. R. Siders, Superintendent of Schools, Pocatello, Idaho; W. K. Dwyer, Superintendent of Schools, Anaconda, Montana; Ira L. Chapman, Superintendent of Schools, New Brunswick, New Jersey; Charles C. Couloumb, District Superintendent of Schools, Philadelphia; C. R. Reed, Superintendent of Schools, Rockford, Illinois; Elga M. Shearer, Assistant Superintendent of Schools, Butte, Montana; Miss

Anthonette Durant, Head of English Department, State Normal School, Platteville, Wisconsin; Carrie Van Gilder, Supervisor of English, Indianola, Iowa; W. H. Carothers, Professor of Secondary Education, State Normal School, Emporia, Kansas; Fred M. Hunter, Superintendent of Schools, Oakland, California.

Howard R. Driggs.

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I

THE HEART OF THE THEME

Our language will be most effectively taught only as it is taught from the living viewpoint—taught, not for the sake of itself, but rather for the sake of service—and taught by truly democratic methods.

OUR LIVING LANGUAGE

"What are you trying to do with English anyway?" the author was recently asked in a jocular vein, by a superintendent of one of our school systems.

"Just one thing," came the reply in like spirit, "simply trying to help raise the subject out of the ranks of the 'dead languages.'"

"You surely do not mean to imply that English is a 'dead language'?"

"Not at all. But it is commonly taught as if it were dead. Too many teachers, in dealing with this central subject of the curriculum, still persist in entering the future with their faces towards the past. They teach our language as something fixed, static. They spend practically all of their time in informing pupils about language, and in having them imitate classic models in composition, instead of in training them effectively to express themselves in the language of the living present."

"You mean, then, that you would have them teach English as it is, and not as it was."

"Certainly. Language is not something static; it is dynamic. It lives and grows. It is ever changing to reflect and shape the changing thoughts and feelings of the people that create and use it. It breathes their spirit; it is the chief medium through which their individual and social action is directed. If our schools are to be of any force in guiding the speech habits of our

people, they must deal directly with this living, growing speech. Our language must be taught not as something developed, but as something constantly in process of development."

"Speaking grammatically," suggested the superintendent, "you believe in teaching the subject not from the past perfect, but from the present progressive viewpoint."

"That strikes the center of the thought exactly. If our language work is to bring not merely cultural, but serviceable results, teachers must cease spending so much time in rambling about literary curiosity shops and make their lessons keep step with the forward-moving present."

"But you surely would not cast aside the classics in promoting this work?"

"Not those that are alive. We cannot do without the Bible, for example. It is always a living standard of Anglo-Saxon simplicity and strength. Neither can we dispense with Shakespeare's best plays, nor with other masterpieces that are still vibrant with life. To these we must continue to turn for help and inspiration in teaching our mother tongue. Our admiration for the excellent things of yesterday, however, should not blind us to the choice things of to-day. It is no discourtesy to Shakespeare to say that one hundred thousand or more words have been added to our tongue since he died, nor to call respectful attention to the literary gems that are constantly being produced out of this enriched and strengthened language."

"You seem to feel that there is no time limit to the production of masterpieces."

"Indeed there is not. Masterpieces may spring from living literature any time. Surely you must agree with me that our language was never used with more strikingly splendid force than it is being used to-day. Do you not pause often in your newspaper reading to note the wonderful language skill of some of our keen-sighted correspondents who are interpreting for us in vivid, virile words the throbbing news of the world? Or have you not been struck with admiration at the language power of some of our leaders who are directing the destinies of the nations through these troublous times?"

"Yes, I must admit that I have had my pride in our language renewed by their clear, ringing messages."

"It is some of that same pride that I would waken, if I could, in the boys and girls of this country. If they could be led to read appreciatively the best things in our living literature, and trained to use with proper pride the clean, strong forms in our living language, the battle for better speech would be won."

"Can not this desired result be accomplished?"

"Not until the general attitude of teachers towards our language is changed. There is a notion among them that our everyday speech is coarse and commonplace. It may be all that, at times, and more. But gold nuggets, we must remember, are found in common sand; and diamonds are discovered in the dirt."

"You believe in letting children play in the sands of speech and dig in the language dirt, then, in the hope of finding golden thoughts and producing literary gems?"

"Have it in your own joking way," was the response.

"I certainly think that if we are to help them to a healthy, natural growth we must not try always to keep them in language pinafores.

"We must remember, too, that out of such speech stuff as we sometimes pretend to despise, the finest literary gems have been made. It was the homely language of the common folk into which John Wycliffe translated the Bible. Chaucer used the same common tongue in telling his Canterbury Tales. Shakespeare likewise created his wonderful plays in the living language of his time. Burns turned the dialect of the home folk of Scotland into charming lyrics. Every writer, indeed, who has reached and held the hearts of the people, has spoken in a tongue that the common folk could understand.

"Some of our false notions about culture need to be cleared away. To be really cultured is to have a cultivated sense of selection. Applied to language, culture is ability to separate the gold from the dross, to find the choice, the fitting word, and to use it with skill.

"To teach language successfully means far more than to drill pupils on symbols and facts of speech. It means rather to train them in a discriminating use of their common tongue, to help them find therein the clean, live, usable words, and to shape out of these words clear, convincing sentences to convey to others their own thoughts and feelings.

"More than this, the proper teaching of any language puts the learner into a sympathetic relationship with the inner life of the people whose feeling that speech embodies. If we would Americanize the people of this

land, we must teach them to think and to speak through our American language."

"What do you mean by 'our American language'?"

"The common, living language used in America to-day."

"What!—the talk of the shop and street?"

"That constitutes part of it. But here I warn you to leap to no false conclusions. I am not advocating that our standards be lowered and that people be allowed to talk as they please. Quite the contrary, I hold that they should be trained away from lawless habits of speech. The best way to get this result is to school them in the use of choice, living language.

"There is a common notion that our American speech is lacking in culture. Certain types of common talk may be open to such criticism; at the same time, no finer examples of a virile and eloquent use of our mother tongue can be found than are found among those that have come and are coming from the pens and tongues of Americans.

"The American language is the language of Lincoln, of Emerson, of Irving, of Hawthorne, of Poe, of Mark Twain, of Roosevelt, of Wilson, and of a host of other writers and speakers who have interpreted and are interpreting in burning, vivid words American life and American ideals."

"But these men use the English tongue."

"Certainly, English as it has been developed and enriched through contact with American thought and feeling. There is no disrespect here for our parent speech; far from it. Every right thinking American

admires our splendid English mother tongue. It is our richest inheritance.

"Fundamentally, the English and the American languages are one. There are, however, distinguishing differences between our speech and that of our cousins across the sea, or that of other English speaking peoples. Our language is marked by peculiar idiomatic expressions, and by a certain spontaneity of construction characteristic of the spirit of this country. It reflects all the dash and vigor and freedom of our daring and masterful America. It is, in a word, typically American.

"This language, organic with our life, vibrant with our thought and feeling, thrilled with our history, is the language that must be taught in the schools. It is the right of the American child to learn how to express himself effectively in his own American tongue."

"That sentiment rings true," said the superintendent; "I agree with it heartily; but I am still looking for light on how this living American speech may best be taught. What practical plan have you to offer for putting life and present-day purpose into the teaching of our language?"

"The gist of my answer has already been suggested in our discussion. To teach our American language successfully, we must deal with it as something alive; we must teach it from the American viewpoint and by truly democratic methods.

"Language teaching means much more than drilling pupils on the formulas of speech. It means to give them command of the common means of communication. It means to train them to use speech, not for the

sake of speech, but for the sake of service. It means to school them in a true appreciation of their American birthright,—freedom of speech."

QUESTIONS

1. Explain and illustrate the essential difference between a dead language and a live one.
2. Show in a concrete way that our language is alive and growing.
3. What is the vital connection between literature that lives and living language?
4. What main thing must be done to teach language from the living viewpoint?
5. What general training is most needed to help American pupils to use our living language with appreciation and skill?

EXERCISES

1. Add to the following expressions five others that have recently come into our language. Take a newspaper and copy from any one page of it all the words you can find which you know have been added to our language since 1900.

Tell which of these, and the ones you choose, seem most likely to be received and to remain in good use. Give reasons for your opinion.

overseas	slacker	over the top	carry on
camouflage	barrage	periscope	blighty
chauffeur	garage	doughboy	aeronautics
pep	movie	Bolsheviki	tractor

2. Find in some newspaper, magazine, or book of recent publication a brief, choice selection in prose or verse illustrative of the best type of our living literature. Be ready to point out the specific literary qualities that make it worthy literature, and join with others in a discussion of similar selections they have made.

THE SERVICES OF SPEECH

Ability to use free speech wisely and well is a patriotic art. On the development of this art depends not only the preservation, but the progress of the liberties of our nation and of the world. There is constant need for school people to appreciate the privileges and the responsibilities that come with freedom of speech. Especially in these dangerous days is there pressing need to train them not to abuse their liberties, but to use them as befits citizens of a true democracy.

Freedom of speech is justified when one speaks for the sake of service. Man is entitled to express himself freely when what he says is said in the right spirit, and is said with the unselfish purpose of benefiting others. His thought contribution may be large or small; his words may be used merely to pass the pleasantries of the day, to give a bit of information, or they may be employed in making a literary masterpiece or in voicing inspirational truths. As long as his words carry the right spirit and aim at helpfulness they are to be welcomed. The essential thing is this: **Freedom of speech should signify serviceable self-expression.**

The prime purpose of speech is service. Language is a social instrument. It was created as a medium through which man could communicate his thoughts, his feelings, and his experiences with his fellows. For what

reason? Simply that he might stir them to think, to feel, to act with him.

In the throbbing work of the world, men use language mainly to inform, to convince, to stimulate in others responsive feeling and action. Literature that lives is produced under the stimulus of a like motive. The stories that grip and hold the human heart, the speech or song that rouses us, spring from no listless brain. They leap alive out of the soul that has a real message. And the world listens.

There is no time for empty language lessons in our crowded curriculum. But time must be taken to train pupils to speak and to write their common language with skill, and to teach them to value the blessing of the right of voicing their thoughts freely. Such training is absolutely necessary if our pupils are to take their part efficiently in this land of free speech.

Speech may best be taught not for its own sake, but for the sake of service. The language lesson, to give a real-life training, must be actuated by a real-life purpose. It must offer to the pupil well-directed practice in the use of speech for the good of some common cause. Thus taught, language becomes a vitalized study.

In the past, language work has been formalized, not vitalized. The time given to the subject has been spent almost entirely in drilling pupils on facts and formulas. Too many teachers, schooled in these old-time methods, still persist in teaching language for the sake of information, devoting most, if not all, of the time to drilling pupils on the mechanical side of the work—learning the names of the bones, if you please, of the skeleton of

speech. Whatever expression work is offered is mostly of the reproductive sort—imitative, not creative in spirit; and very little of it is aimed at real service.

Teachers of another type, in protest against this lifeless sort of work, have gone to another extreme. Language with them is made merely an expressional study. Let the child talk as he feels, their argument runs; give him ample opportunity to speak and write freely in all of his classes, and he will soon learn to use language fluently—yes, indeed, but not accurately, nor serviceably.

Neither of these plans is well balanced. **Language work must deal with much more than the skeleton of speech;** yet without a framework to give it form and strength, it cannot be other than a spineless study. Learning the mechanics of speech is not enough; neither is expression for expression's sake sufficient. To be really effective, language training must combine the best in these two methods and at the same time take a forward step.

The language skeleton should be given organs and muscles and skin and nerves to make it a living body; but, to be a useful being, its energies must be turned toward real service. Not only must our language work have form and life, but it must be set at worth-while work.

Formal work in this plan is not eliminated; it is simply subordinated. The emphasis is placed where it belongs, on the expression side of the subject; but not to the neglect of necessary teaching of fundamental principles and the giving of essential drills to fix right

language habits in tongue and fingers. More important still: all of this work is aimed at training the pupil to use speech as a means of service.

The services of speech in our democratic country are vital and varied. **Life is interlinked in every way with language.** Language is the chief means of communication. It connects with every activity. It is the main channel through which thought and feeling flow.

Among the various general services it is constantly performing are these:

1. **Social service,** reflected in daily conversation, social letter writing, the interchange of the courtesies of daily life, and the use of language in more formal social functions.

2. **Business service,** shown in the language used in various transactions, in correspondence, and in advertising and promotive work.

3. **Professional service,** that connected with the work of teaching, of the ministry, of legal practice, of medicine, and of other professions.

4. **Journalistic service,** concerned with the gathering and publishing of news, the writing of magazine articles, and with other means of dispensing information.

5. **Political service,** dealing with civic and governmental affairs, with directing the affairs and shaping the work and ideals of a democracy.

6. **Literary service,** reflected at its best through the masterpieces of literature, in the form of poems, stories, orations, essays, the drama, and other productions.

7. **Scientific service.**

8. **Historical service.**

9. **Educational service**, where language is the main means of learning. The pupil's progress is dependent largely on his ability to read and to speak his mother tongue. Reading is the "open sesame" to the treasure-house of knowledge. Language is the magic password that sets the thoughts and feelings free.

A striking illustration of this last thought is found in the story of Helen Keller. Speaking of her own life, this gifted girl tells how she was led out of the prison house of deafness and blindness into which she had been plunged by a tragic illness. She says:

"One brief spring musical with the song of robin and mockingbird, one summer rich in fruit and roses, one autumn of gold and crimson, sped by and left their gifts at the feet of an eager, delighted child. Then in the dreary month of February came the illness which closed my eyes and ears. Gradually I got used to the silence and darkness that surrounded me and forgot that it had ever been different, until she came—my teacher who was to set my spirit free."

What did Anna Sullivan do for Helen Keller? Literally she put into her hand the key of language, with which her pupil might unlock the treasure-house of knowledge and by which she might express her own thoughts and feelings.

Here is the story as Helen Keller tells it:

"The morning after my teacher came she led me into her room and gave me a doll. When I had played with it a little while, Miss Sullivan slowly spelled into my hand 'd-o-l-l.' I was at once interested in this finger play and tried to imitate it. When I finally succeeded

in making the letters correctly, I was flushed with childish pleasure and pride.

"Running down stairs to my mother I held up my hand and made the letters for doll. I did not know that I was spelling a word or even that words existed. I was simply making my fingers go in monkey-like imitation. In the days that followed I learned to spell in this uncomprehending way a great many words, among them, pin, hat, cup, and a few verbs like sit, stand, and walk. But my teacher had been with me several weeks before I understood that everything has a name.

"One day, while I was playing with my new doll, Miss Sullivan put my big rag doll into my lap also, spelled 'd-o-l-l,' and tried to make me understand that 'd-o-l-l' applied to both. Earlier in the day we had had a tussle over the words 'm-u-g' and 'w-a-t-e-r.' Miss Sullivan had tried to impress it upon me that 'm-u-g' is mug and that 'w-a-t-e-r' is water, but I persisted in confounding the two.

"We walked down the path to the well-house, attracted by the fragrance of the honeysuckle with which it was covered. Some one was drawing water and my teacher placed my hand under the spout. As the cool stream gushed over one hand she spelled into the other the word 'w-a-t-e-r,' first slowly, then rapidly. I stood still, my whole attention fixed upon the motion of her fingers. Suddenly I felt a misty consciousness as of something forgotten—a thrill of returning thought; and somehow the mystery of language was revealed to me. I knew that 'w-a-t-e-r' meant the wonderful cool something that was flowing over my hand.

"That living word awakened my soul, gave it light, hope, joy, set it free!"

Language teaching is fundamental in the teaching process. It is the gateway to learning. Every pupil, like Helen Keller, must be trained to read and to use it before he can make progress in his school work.

This also is true: **The more effective a person is in the use of language, other things being equal, the more efficiently he can take his part in life.** The teacher, for illustration, who uses language with finish and force, who can shape the skillful question, who can explain interestingly, who can tell a story well, has a great advantage over the one whose speech is halting and crude.

The lawyer who speaks with clear and convincing style has added power. Think of Abraham Lincoln. Was not much of his power due to his mastery of our language? "When Lincoln speaks," said Lowell, "it seems as if the people are thinking out loud."

The business man also finds clear, concise, and courteous speech an asset of great value. It would be impossible to compute the daily loss in time and money caused by blunders in business correspondence and business speech; language can hardly be measured on the dollar basis; but faulty speech is certainly a great overhead expense.

Choice language gives culture to the home; it adds grace to society; and in this democratic life of ours, effective speech is an essential. The power to speak well has always been closely coupled with leadership in the affairs of government.

All of this being undeniably true, what greater work

lies before the teachers in our schools than to give pupils the right feeling toward language and to cultivate in them the power to use it with purpose? If that work is to be effectively done, the language lesson must be made a vital exercise in serviceable self-expression. It can be done, indeed, only by the application of democratic methods, based on the central principle of true education.

In this thought of using speech for real service we find our guiding principle—our central aim and the main problems connected with teaching the subject.

QUESTIONS

1. What responsibility goes with the privilege of free speech?
2. What central aim should characterize the language training in our schools?
3. Show how the truly serviceable language lesson includes the necessary formal work and at the same time gives training in self-expression.
4. What are the main services performed through the use of speech?
5. Show just how efficiency in speech makes for more successful service in every phase of life.

EXERCISES

1. Prepare to report briefly some language lesson you have observed which resulted merely in giving information about language; another wherein the returns were chiefly expression for expression's sake; another that gave real training in serviceable self-expression.

Join with your associates in a discussion of how the live, serviceable type of language lesson might be brought into common practice in the schoolroom.

2. Write a paragraph showing clearly the relation of language efficiency to success in any of the vocations. Share your thoughts with others who will write similar paragraphs on this topic.

AMERICANIZING OUR METHODS

The schools of a democracy should be miniature democracies. This means that, not only in their outward expressions of loyalty, but in their inner workings, they should reflect the spirit and the methods of a self-governing country. How else can they effectively train the youth for free and serviceable citizenship?

Two main lines must naturally be followed in bringing and in keeping our American schools up to this consistent standard: 1. The principles and practices of sane self-government must be introduced into systems of school control; 2. The daily class work must be based on democratic methods.

It is aside from the central purpose of this discussion to give other than passing attention to the first of these essentials. We must look to superintendents, principals, teachers, and other directors to develop workable plans for making our schools sensibly self-governing.

The bringing of democratic methods into class work, however, is a problem that belongs primarily to the teacher. As such it connects closely with the main theme of this book. **Our living language, indeed, can be taught most successfully only as the work is democratized.** To gain skill in speech, the pupil must be given well-directed practice in serviceable self-expression.

To make opportunity for such practice means to develop the democratic recitation.

Teachers generally need help in democratizing their class work. Our schools ordinarily are more or less autocratic in their spirit and practices. Pupils are given little choice as to their lessons; they are commonly driven, rather than led, to learn; the teacher more frequently dominates than directs the minds of the learners. All of this is frankly admitted by some teachers; but they ask defensively, "How can we make the work more democratic without losing control of the class?"

A little clearer understanding of the real meaning of democracy seems to be needed. **Democracy means not lack of control but self-control.** The cure for autocracy is not anarchy; it is democracy.

Individual freedom is justified only in so far as it promotes the general good. In a school, as in a democracy, self-expression must be held within the boundaries of common sense. The best class work is not done when ten, twenty, or more pupils work in "lock step" fashion under the dictatorial will of the teacher; nor is that a model school where every pupil is allowed to follow his own whims regardless of the rights of others. The most desirable results come when the pupils, under the tactful leadership of the teacher, work individually, yet coöperatively, in the interests of the whole class. Such a school reflects truly the inner spirit of true Americanism.

A democracy is a nation where every citizen is given opportunity to serve himself through service for others.

The democratic recitation is one which affords inviting opportunities for each pupil to perfect himself by participating freely in real-life exercises for the good of all. It is a give-and-take process in education.

The spirit of our free American life training is suggested by the action of the mountain stream. The rock fragments there are rounded and polished by free contact with other stones. In our democracy, likewise, the individual must leap into the various currents of our national life and take his chances with his fellows. To receive the benefits offered freely to all, he must contribute his energies to the common cause. Call it a schooling in "the university of hard knocks" if you will. It is after all the only schooling that actually counts and lasts. Our schools must give some such real-life training if their work is to be vital and lasting.

The democratic method of teaching is not only nationally right, but educationally sound. It is based on this first principle of progressive pedagogy: **Without serviceable self-expression there can be no real education.**

Education implies expression. It means not "to crush out" but "to lead out" the learner. Only as the pupil is given a chance to express himself can he grow at all; but to grow rightly, his expression must be guided towards the ends of real-life service.

The school too often is made an institution of **repression** and **suppression** rather than of **expression.** The school master, with the best of intentions, tries to "train up the child in the way he should go" by the use of autocratic methods. The result is that spontaneity, initiative, and originality, the most desirable of qualities

to be cultivated in the human being, are choked and thwarted. The pupil's natural growth is prevented rather than promoted.

A striking incident will serve to illuminate this point. Some years ago a little tree was broken down by a furniture van that was being driven into a certain back yard. The next spring, in working his garden, the owner of the house noticed a stick lying on the ground and threw it aside. Afterwards he found a "weed" growing where the tree had stood, and cut it down with his hoe. A week or so later the same weed appeared again and a second time it was cut down. Then the gardener left for his vacation. When he returned, he again discovered the persistent weed. On examining it more closely, he discovered it to be no weed at all, but a sprout from a quick growing tree which is sometimes called the tree of paradise. He wanted the tree, so he began to encourage the young shoot to express itself. To-day the tree, developed from this beginning, stands fully thirty feet in height, spreading its branches to make an inviting place of coolness and rest.

There is no suggestion here that the teacher should take a vacation occasionally to give the child a chance to grow. It is certain, however, that better results would come generally from our school work if pupils were given an encouraging opportunity to express themselves, instead of being restrained and over-helped by well-intentioned teachers. There has certainly been too much pruning of a kind disastrous to child growth.

In another part of this same garden is another tree of paradise, which was given a chance from the first to

express itself freely. It is taller and more shapely, and it bears no scars from the hacking of the hoe, but through careful cultivating and trimming it has developed to its finest form.

Education involves a double process—cultivating and guiding. To promote the growth of the learner the school must first of all surround him with conditions most encouraging to his natural growth, and second, by tactful guidance, train his growth rightly. "The teacher," says Dr. John M. Tyler, "should enter into a kind of partnership with nature" for the good of the child.

Growth, we must remember, does not come from without, but from within. The pupil's healthy development is a direct result of activity, stimulated by the true social motive. The most effective help the teacher can give the pupil is not to preach facts, nor to dictate directions, but to create right conditions for growth, and in the spirit of true Americanism, lead the learner to develop himself by participation in the opportunities afforded for the good of all.

QUESTIONS

1. Explain briefly the true meaning of Americanism.
2. What is the first step necessary to make our schools thoroughly American in spirit and in practice?
3. Describe some school or class you know well which is characterized by truly American methods.
4. What pedagogical truth is illuminated by the story told of the tree of paradise? Show the application of that truth in the process of Americanizing our schools.

EXERCISES

1. Write a paragraph stating clearly and concisely what you think the World War has demonstrated as to the relative value of autocratic and democratic systems of education. Share your thoughts on this question with others who will write similar paragraphs.

2. What autocratic tendency have you observed most among teachers in conducting recitations, in assigning work, or in other phases of teaching? Be ready to make your criticism constructive by giving some practical suggestion to show how this tendency may best be overcome. Have a democratic discussion of this problem.

THE DEMOCRATIC RECITATION

The class may be its own best teacher. Pupils, tactfully guided and stimulated, can help one another greatly in solving their own problems. To give them unnecessary help is to hinder their progress and to rob them of their birthright to develop themselves by working with their equals in the spirit of true democracy.

Individual perfection is made possible only through social contact. Each one needs the stimulating and guiding influence of the group to bring him up to his best. This thought will be made clear by the following little tale of a traveler:

"I was going through the Blue Mountains of Oregon," said he, "when an old lumberman came into the car and sat down beside me.

"As the train sped along, I noticed a splendid pine tree growing by itself on the hillside. Pointing to it I remarked, 'That tree would make fine lumber.'

"The old lumberman shook his head.

" 'Why not?' I asked.

" 'Well, boy, you see it grows out there by itself. It has all the chance it wants to put on big limbs.'

" 'Yes.'

" 'Every limb means a knot. That would be a knotty old stick to cut up, and the lumber would not be worth much when the job was done. It is the tree that grows in the grove that makes the best timber; provi-

din', of course, it has room enough to grow. Such a tree puts on branches only towards the top. But when it is sawed it makes straight-grained lumber.' "

What the grove is to the individual tree the school should be to the pupil—an opportunity to develop to his best through group-guided self-expression. This type of school is possible only as democratic methods are put into practice in our school work.

The democratic recitation, briefly described, is an exercise in useful self-expression. Each pupil therein is given encouraging opportunity to gain the benefits to come from the class, by giving of himself to the common cause.

The best lesson is one in which every pupil takes part. The recitation can scarcely be effective unless characterized by mental activity and free expression. This activity and expression, however, should be controlled—self-controlled, and guided towards the accomplishment of a common purpose. Activity is necessary to accomplish any kind of work. Disorder, however, is disastrous.

In the truly democratic recitation the pupils work freely, happily. The teacher works with them, not for them. Expression that helps to forward the work is welcomed; that which is not pertinent is discouraged. Thus the pupils are given opportunity to develop themselves through the proper exercise of their minds in working out problems of mutual interest and benefit. In the democratic recitation the teacher discovers the pupil's life interests and guides them towards educational achievement.

It requires more tact perhaps to conduct such a recitation than it would to dole out facts, or to entertain pupils by performing for them. From outward appearance, too, the democratic recitation may seem less successful than the one wherein the children are working in so-called perfect order under the dictation of the teacher, or wherein they are being entertained by her. But what of the growth of the child if the teacher does all the work? Does not such a recitation defeat the central purpose of education?

In various forms the democratic recitation is already a reality in our best schools. Leading teachers in different parts of the land, and certain whole school systems are now following most successfully these methods of teaching. They are demonstrating daily the fact that pupils can be given a rightful share in directing their own class work, without turning liberty into lawlessness, and with richer returns than have ever come from any autocratic system of teaching.

Why, then, have these methods not been more generally put into practice?

Three main reasons account for our slowness in adopting them: 1. Teachers naturally tend to follow the autocratic methods by which they themselves have been taught; 2. The courses of study and the textbooks usually given them to follow are undemocratic in spirit and method; 3. Overburdened by the demands of a crowded curriculum, teachers too often take the autocratic road because they think it offers an easier way to teach. In this, however, they are seriously mistaken. Not the autocratic but the democratic path is the line

of least resistance. The way to remove these obstacles from the path of true teaching is plain.

The first duty in this matter rests upon all teachers. Teachers should teach as they have been taught; but they must be taught by right methods from the very beginning. This means that college professors, high school instructors, and elementary school teachers all have a responsibility in training teachers in the way they should go. **The democratizing of our methods must extend throughout our whole school system.** This consistent demand is made primarily not for the better training of teachers, but for the good of the children.

A brief course in pedagogy is not enough. Better this than nothing, of course; but the training must go deeper. Right teaching methods should be taught indirectly in every class. The work of the school of education would then be, not to cover up false training, but rather to add a finishing touch to bring out the native grain of the truly trained teacher.

The second duty in clearing the way for democratic class work rests upon the leaders in education. It is their business, with the help of teachers, to provide courses of study and textbooks that are truly democratic. Teachers and pupils alike must have proper plans and the right tools if their work is to be done effectively. Courses of study must give teachers well-guided opportunity to work freely; and texts must not drive but lead and direct pupils along life lines of learning, if the best results are to be achieved.

The third difficulty is mainly a mental one. It will be quickly cleared away when teachers come to feel

keenly the truth that **the democratic recitation offers not only the best, but the easiest way to teach.** Lessons based on this method follow the currents of natural interest; the teacher is not forever pulling up-stream. The pupils work not against but with the teacher for their own good.

Democratic methods may be applied in every line of work. Geography, history, science, mathematics, art, music, literature, language, and all other subjects may be readily and most successfully taught in this way. The essential thing is for each teacher to take the point of view already plainly indicated in this discussion, and in the second place to give the method an impartial proving out in practice. The results will amply justify these assertions.

QUESTIONS

1. From the viewpoint of the learner, what is the main purpose of a class recitation? From the viewpoint of the teacher?
2. Why must the recitation be essentially democratic in order to bring the richest returns to both teacher and pupil?
3. Why is the democratic method of teaching not only educationally right but easiest to follow?
4. Account for the slowness of teachers to take up this method.
5. What practical suggestion would you offer for stimulating them to adopt this progressive plan?

EXERCISES

1. Using one of the following as a topic sentence, write a paragraph making a clear explanation of the point:
   a. The class itself may be its own best teacher.
   b. The pupil's progress is to be measured by what he gives to the class.
   c. Without proper expression there can be no real education.

Be ready to give experience from your own school life in proof of what you say on the topics you develop.

2. Plan and teach a democratic lesson in language. Correlate the work with local history, local geography, community civics, home industries, or with some other subject close to the lives of the pupils. Have a round table report and discussion of the results of your recitation and others given by your associates.

3. Make a list of the strongest points you have noticed in any truly democratic recitation. How does it differ from any other recitation?

II

THE COMMON CAUSE

No subject can be most successfully taught unless some good language training comes as a valuable by-product from the work.

TEAM WORK IN TEACHING LANGUAGE

Language is at once a means of learning and a medium of art. As a means of learning it belongs to every other study in the curriculum. As a means of literary expression it is of special concern mainly to teachers of language. To recognize clearly this two-fold aspect of the subject, is to see more plainly the boundary lines of our general and specific duties in teaching it.

Every lesson in one sense is a language lesson. Every teacher is directly or indirectly a teacher of the mother tongue. No subject can be most successfully taught unless some good language training comes as a valuable by-product from the work.

The following instance will make the point clear:

A certain lad came home from high school recently with a load of books under his arm.

"Daddy," he said, "I have to take an examination to-morrow. Won't you help me?"

"Certainly," responded the father, "what are you worrying most about?"

"This general science. I know the teacher will give us some stiff questions on these old siphons and pumps and other things, and I don't think I can tell much about them."

"What is a siphon?" he was asked.

"Oh, it's a kind of a thing—"

"Just a moment, laddie," interrupted the father; "now, make a clear sentence telling what a siphon is."

"I can't explain it."

"Oh, spell your **can't** without the 't'."

"Well, a siphon is a kind of tube, or something—"

"'A tube or something.' Is that very scientific language?"

"Would you call it an instrument?" he asked.

"Perhaps, but 'instrument' has a variety of meanings."

"Is it a mechanical device?"

"That is more accurate; go ahead."

"Well, a siphon is a mechanical device used to raise water—"

"Only water?"

"—To raise liquids from a lower over a higher level.—Will that do?"

"Isn't it a more satisfactory explanation to you," asked the father, "than to say, 'A siphon is a kind of thing'?"

The boy's attention was then turned to the making of sentences to explain accurately the principle of the pump. He was held further to the answering in clear language of other anticipated questions.

"Oh, I see what you're driving at, daddy," the lad finally commented, "a fellow may know a thing pretty well but he always knows it better when he can tell it well."

"You have discovered a great truth," was the reply; "just put it into practice hereafter and your examination troubles will largely disappear."

Impression and expression are very closely inter-

twined in the educational process. If teachers in all subjects could be made to appreciate this thought, a good many of the ordinary language difficulties that now vex us could be quickly cleared away.

Teachers generally do not seem to feel keenly this truth. They try to impress facts upon the child's mind instead of giving him a chance to impress the facts upon himself by expressing them in plain language. This is true not only in science, but also in arithmetic, in geography, in history, and in all of the other subjects of the curriculum. By their actions, if not by their words, many teachers are constantly saying, "The pupil's language is no concern of mine. That work belongs to the teacher of language." The idea is a fatally false one.

Language is the common currency of thought. Without its help the mental business of the recitation could not be transacted. That teacher is poor, indeed, who does not possess enough of this common medium of exchange between mind and mind to conduct the affairs of the class with facility. The pupil, too, is robbed of the richest the recitation can bring unless he is given opportunity to clarify his thoughts by expressing them clearly.

Failure to apply this truth in all classes accounts largely for both the careless speech and the careless thought habits too prevalent in our schools. Permitting pupils to use lax language in any recitation tends to develop lazy thinkers.

President Charles W. Eliot of Harvard University, in a recent statement on education, reinforces this thought when he says, "No systematic, everyday practice in

accurate statement has been insisted on." "It is a matter of everyday experience," he continues, "that most Americans cannot repeat correctly a conversation, describe accurately what they have seen or heard, or write on the spot a correct account of a transaction they have witnessed."

The remedy for this common defect, President Eliot urges, is not book work, but persistent practice in observation and expression.

Here he strikes the core of the whole matter. Pupils in all classes must be trained in the use of clear language if right habits of speech are to be finally formed, and clear and accurate thought work promoted.

This is no plea from the English department. It is simply a reminder of the self-evident fact that **language is the chief instrument in every other branch of study.** The teacher of any subject who fails to give due attention to the language side of the subject simply fails to promote the best interests of his own special work.

A certain complement of language training naturally goes with every subject. The history lesson calls for an explanation of the facts in historical language. Geography also must be clearly presented. Science is not well taught unless the pupil can tell with scientific accuracy what he learns. Mathematics, likewise, offers an excellent opportunity to train the student to express himself in a straight line, a rare accomplishment in speech.

An instance to reinforce this point comes from the life of Lincoln. Speaking of his self-education, he once said that among his early school books he found an old

geometry. In it he discovered the word **demonstrate,** and immediately he began to demonstrate in logical language the various problems it contained. This training, he felt certain, helped him greatly throughout his life to follow the natural sequences of a thought to its logical conclusion.

Rightly taught every subject makes its distinctive contribution indirectly to language training. The part of every teacher is to make sure that the speech side of the subject is not forgotten. On the English department rests the responsibility for teaching the essential principles of language and giving the necessary practice and drills to make these principles sure; but on all teachers rests the general responsibility for holding pupils to clear and correct speech.

Such team work will bring the results we seek. When a hunter goes after rabbits or ducks, he takes a shot gun; if he hunts big game he carries a rifle. There is just as much lead used in a shot gun as in a rifle, but the lead in the rifle works as a unit. Language training in our schools has been too much of the shot gun type. The school has not been united in the achievement of this common purpose. As a consequence much of the excellent work of individual teachers has been wasted. The call of the hour is for coöperation, for unity of effort in promoting this common cause.

QUESTIONS

1. Express in a sentence of your own the central thought of the chapter.

2. Why is due attention to the language side of any subject essential to the successful teaching of that subject?

3. How can every teacher give daily help in overcoming the defect pointed out by President Eliot?

4. What language lesson for all is suggested in the instance told of Lincoln's study of geometry?

5. Suggest two or more ways by which better team work in teaching language may be brought about.

EXERCISES

1. Plan to take active part in a round table discussion of the following topics:

   a. Good language training comes as one of the most valuable by-products from every successfully taught lesson.

   b. No thought is really impressed until it has been properly expressed.

   c. Clear expression is the best means of clarifying thought.

2. Write a paragraph pointing out how a clear use of language helps the pupil in history, mathematics, geography, science, or any other subject.

SCHOOL STANDARDS IN SPEECH

There are two kinds of language teaching—direct and indirect. Direct language teaching rightly belongs to the language class proper. Indirect teaching is given in connection with every class irrespective of the subject taught. If our speech training is to bring right results, these two kinds of language work must be made to move in the same direction.

Language practice in the schoolroom should certainly parallel language precepts. Unfortunately for the common cause, however, they too frequently fail to do so. Slovenly speech and careless written work too often accepted from pupils prove the undoing of much excellent direct teaching in language. Some teachers of language even at times neutralize the effect of their own instruction by failing to give the practice side of language the attention its importance demands.

This indirect training, it should be remembered, may be more potent than the direct. The actual use of language in all of the various classes exercises a more lasting influence on the pupil's speech habits than all the teaching of facts and rules could possibly do. It was this point a leading educator had in mind when he said, "More English is taught in the schoolroom outside of the English classes than in them."

Addressing the Indian school teachers in manual training, home economics, agriculture, and athletics, a

prominent educator of the Indians said: "Upon you rests a special language duty. Our Indian pupils are freer to express themselves while working with you than when doing more formal class work. You may have even a better opportunity than the regular English teacher to help them acquire the right habits of speech."

These sensible suggestions apply with equal force in all phases of school work. Teaching correct principles of language is of little value unless it is followed in all classes by well-directed practice that fixes these principles in tongue and fingers.

Teachers in other than language classes give such language training indirectly. They can not interrupt their regular work constantly to give lessons in grammar and rhetoric without seriously interfering with the special subject at hand. But they can do a great deal indirectly to reinforce the language training and at the same time enforce far better the lesson that the language carries.

Three things at least are practically possible: 1. An earnest attempt to set the right example in living language; 2. Persistent effort to keep the speech of pupils clear, to the point, and clean of common errors; 3. A firm stand for neat and accurate written work.

To help the learner express his thoughts more clearly is the chief aim of this concerted effort. Any language help given him should be subordinated to this main purpose. Whether he is answering a question, making an explanation, discussing a point, or telling a story, the teacher's business is to help him say clearly what he has to say. How else can his part in the recitation be

performed with credit to himself or be of real service to the class?

Not mechanics of speech, but making clear the thought, should receive the major attention. Too many teachers, becoming over-concerned with minor mistakes, keep nagging the pupil with corrections. These less important matters may be tactfully taken care of while the pupil's mind is dominated by the idea of making himself clearly understood.

All of the essentials of effective speech and writing are comprehended in that main purpose. Right posture, clear tones, proper enunciation and pronunciation, accuracy in choice of words, correctness in grammar and punctuation, well constructed sentences and paragraphs, are all necessary to give clearness to speech or written work. The teacher, therefore, in working for clear expression in any line of thought, of necessity takes care indirectly of the various essentials of effective language.

Some common standards to guide this general effort for the uplift of schoolroom speech might also prove helpful. In open discussion the chief needs of pupils, the part to be played by all teachers, and the standards by which the work is to be gauged, all may be determined. A clearer understanding of these common duties would surely prove most helpful in uplifting the language work of the schools.

QUESTIONS

1. Explain and illustrate direct language teaching; indirect language teaching.

2. Illustrate just what is implied in the suggestion that the indirect teaching of language parallel the direct.

3. In what practical ways can teachers of other than language classes give most effective help in cultivating language skill and at the same time teach better the special subject at hand?

4. What central thought should be kept constantly in mind in promoting better speech during the class period?

5. What essentials of language are requisite in making our speech clear?

EXERCISES

1. Observe carefully the oral and written language habits of your pupils for one week, jotting down the main errors, then join your associates in a discussion of school standards in speech. Let the following suggestive outline guide the discussion:

ORAL	WRITTEN
Posture in reciting	Form of composition
Voice habits	Spelling, Punctuation
Enunciation and pronunciation	Penmanship

ORAL AND WRITTEN

Correct Usage
Sentence Structure
Choice of Words

What can be done by every teacher to help make the work better along these nine essential lines?

THE LIVING EXAMPLE

Team work in teaching language assumes its most vital aspect when applied to the classroom speech of teachers. From one to six hours a day pupils are obliged to listen to this living language. The impression of it for good or ill on their language habits is deep and lasting. One may doubt Irving's jocular assertion that the quavers of Ichabod Crane's voice still linger in the Sleepy Hollow schoolhouse; but it is certain that the echoes from many a teacher's tongue linger ever after in the speech of his or her pupils.

Teachers are vitally concerned that those echoes shall be praiseworthy. **Pupils are entitled to an inspiring example in living language from their teachers.** But more than this, the teacher's own personal and professional success is so closely connected with skill in speech that every teacher should be eager to set the right example in the use of language.

The good effects of right language leadership are clearly shown in a remark made recently by an appreciative patron of a certain school: "I would not take a thousand dollars for the help in enunciation Miss —— gave to my boy while he was in the third grade."

This help came mainly from the living example set by the teacher named. Her speaking voice was so pleasing, and her articulation so artistic that every child who came to be taught by her was given an uplift in

speech. He acquired skill to speak the words "trippingly on the tongue" largely from imitation of the teacher's skillful enunciation.

Not every teacher is naturally so gifted; but all teachers can perfect their skill in speech by well-directed practice. The central purpose of this discussion is to offer a few practical suggestions to improve speech practice.

First of all, a concerted effort to better the classroom language of teachers should be made in every school system. A frank discussion of the speech needs of teachers would be valuable. The effect of this should be to stimulate every teacher to strive to find practical ways of promoting self-improvement.

The five essential lines along which this self-effort for better oral language may first be directed are these:

1. **The Teacher's Voice.** What are the chief tone troubles of the teacher? Discuss their cause and cure.

2. **Essentials in Enunciation.** What sounds give most difficulty? What words are commonly mispronounced? Suggest helpful exercises for cultivating skill in articulating words. In this connection, correct pronunciation may also be given attention.

3. **Oral Sentence Building.** What are the common difficulties in sentence structure? How may these best be overcome and how may skill to shape sentences with ease and accuracy in speaking be cultivated?

4. **A Command of Words.** What are the best ways to gain a rich and ready speaking vocabulary?

5. **Correct Usage.** Discover the type mistakes commonly made in violation of the rules of grammar. Suggest tongue training exercises to overcome them.

Since the last four of these essential phases of oral language are discussed rather fully in succeeding chapters of this book, it is not necessary to deal with them in further detail here. A few general suggestions as to the teacher's voice may prove helpful, however, at this point.

The old singing master of our school used to say, "The voice is the greatest of all instruments, because God is its maker."

This choice instrument is greatly overused and much misused among teachers. Generally speaking, teachers talk too much—far more than is necessary. And they use their voices wrongly, pitching them too high usually, and failing to sustain them with the proper methods of breathing. The results are disastrous to the teacher's tones, and very trying on the sensitive nerves of the pupils.

The discipline of the school is greatly dependent on the voice of the teacher. A nervous nagging tone tends to make children restless and refractory. A well-rounded, well-placed quiet tone produces just the opposite effect. The writer once visited two classrooms across the hall from each other. In the first, an interesting lesson was being taught in high-pitched tones with rapid-fire words by a brilliant teacher. The boys and girls were responding feverishly. In the other room, a thoughtful study was being conducted in clear, quiet tones by a gentle-voiced teacher. The children were working just as interestedly, but with no waste of nerve energy. The difference in the spirit of the two rooms was due entirely, it seemed, to the voices of the two

teachers. Back of their voices, of course, were their personalities; but the voice was the main medium of communication.

There is no thought here to blame teachers who happen to have faulty voices. They need counsel rather than censure.

If wrong methods of voice production are used, the result of taxing the vocal organs for hours in directing and teaching energetic pupils may prove disastrous. Such trying work will tell in time on any voice, no matter how sweet-toned it is at the beginning. The teacher, however, may preserve and even strengthen her voice by understanding it and using it with care.

Teachers must learn to protect themselves. They should give their voices an occasional recess. Both for the sake of the teacher and for the good of the work, **children should usually be given a greater share in the talking.**

Teachers should also learn to listen to their own voices. A little first-hand study of vocal organs would help teachers to use their voices more intelligently. The essential principles underlying tone-production may be learned readily by a little careful observation of our own speech habits.

This self-study of the voice should be directed along these three main lines:

Proper Breathing
Right Resonance
Articulation and Modulation

The chief cause of weak voices is weak breathing. Most people use only the small muscles of the upper

chest in this process. They should learn to breathe deeply by bringing the diaphragm into action and by using the strong muscles of the abdomen to assist in expelling and inhaling the air.

Faulty tones are due to faulty resonance. Colds, adenoids, enlarged tonsils, and other affections of the head and throat often cause thick, unvibrant tones. The common "teacher tone," however, seems generally due to nerve tension that finally fixes a wrong placement of the tone.

Effective articulation depends mainly on the easeful yet controlled action of the jaw, the tongue, and the lips. To be able to speak without "mouthing the words" one must use these organs with facility.

The importance of the tongue in articulation was once suggested in an interesting way by an Indian.

He and a white man were traveling together on a stage out West when they fell to talking about the Indian language. A chipmunk darted across the road.

"What is the Indian name for the Chipmunk?" the white man asked.

"Wid-it-si," was the reply.

"Wid-it-si," repeated the white man.

The Indian laughed.

"Oh you heap learn Injun talk quick," he said; "your tongue no tied."

Proper modulation of the voice comes from natural self-expression. It is reflected in true conversational tones. When one is really at ease, one speaks naturally. More naturalness is needed in our schoolrooms.

Most of our teachers would profit by keeping in their

hearts this suggestion from Shakespeare's "King Lear." Speaking of Cordelia he says,

"Her voice was ever soft,
Gentle, and low; an excellent thing in woman."

The male teacher usually needs, however, another guiding thought. His tones often are too low; they frequently are lacking in vibrancy and clearness. How many classes have been put to sleep by the monotony of such a teacher's tones? Unfortunately, it is difficult to rouse teachers of this sort to a necessity of brightening their voices and making their speech sparkle. A common notion has prevailed, especially in scholastic circles, that if one takes care of the thought side of the lesson, the presentation side of it will take care of itself.

A great deal of time is commonly wasted, and much teaching misses the mark because of the teacher's failure to speak clearly and convincingly. Thought is of first importance, of course; but we must remember that a thing said does not amount to much unless it is said well.

Every day is the teacher's opportunity to cultivate skill to say things well. The teacher who fails to seize the privileges that come in this daily work to develop ability to make a clear-cut explanation, to shape questions effectively, to give a good illustration, or to tell a story well when need calls for it, has missed one of the many advantages this work offers for self-improvement.

Many teachers have turned their language opportunity to good account. Kate Douglas Wiggin, for ex-

ample, learned the art of story telling in the kindergartens of California. It was her artistic work there that finally gave to the world the story of "Patsy" and "The Birds' Christmas Carol." Another striking example is found in President Wilson. Much of his power to speak and to write effectively came from his painstaking practice in language while he was working as a teacher.

This brings us to our final point. The teacher should both speak and write. Speech makes for fluency, writing for accuracy. If the teacher does nothing else but talk, talk, his speech is likely to develop into rambling preaching. It is a good thing frequently to try to express oneself effectively through the pen.

Would you develop skill in authorship? **Write something every day.** It may be only a friendly letter, a passing thought, a funny story, a paragraph to develop clearly the thought that you believe in strongly, or a tale to be told to your class. Try to express effectively what stirs you. These are the finger exercises in the practice towards authorship.

Teachers might also help one another in language. If teachers' meetings were devoted in part to cultivating skill in the use of our mother tongue, the effect would manifest itself in greatly improved language throughout the whole school.

If the living examples are right, if teachers train themselves to speak with skill and to write effectively, there will be little need to worry over the results in the teaching of our living language. It will be taught effectively in every class in a most vital way.

QUESTIONS

1. Restate the central thought of the foregoing chapter.

2. Relate some experience of your own which illustrates the beneficial and lasting effects of the right kind of living example in language.

3. Show clearly the close relationship between voice control and class control. Illustrate the point with practical instances.

4. How can the teacher not only protect the voice, but strengthen and improve it while she is teaching?

5. In what other ways may the teacher's school practice in language be turned to good account for the benefit of learners as well as of the teacher?

EXERCISES

1. Along which of the five essential language lines given on page 44 do you feel you need most help? Make a careful self study of your language habits before answering the question.

2. Have a round table discussion on the following suggestions:

   a. What part of each teachers' meeting shall be devoted during the year to promoting better speech habits in the schools?

   b. A "Better Speech Club" for teachers. In what practical way can such an organization be brought about and made most useful?

3. Make a list of the speech habits you like best on the part of the minister in the pulpit, the lawyer before the jury, the doctor or nurse in the sick room, the clerk behind the counter, the telephone girl, the mother.

THE LANGUAGE STUDY PLAN

Developing a course of study is not unlike constructing a building. There must be first, a general plan for the workers to follow; and second, suitable materials, properly shaped and arranged, to fit into that plan. Only as these two necessary elements are provided, can unity of action be brought about and right results be achieved. **Concerted action and success in language work are likewise predicated on the unification of plan and materials.**

This means two things in one: 1. A general outline, or brief, marking clearly the course to be followed from kindergarten to college; 2. Carefully selected texts and helps that articulate with the general plan and provide in teachable form life-giving lessons to enrich and inspirit the course. The essential thing is that these two necessary elements be well articulated.

Such a satisfactory articulation between the general plan and the texts provided for use is wanting. As a result the language work is generally in a more or less chaotic condition. Texts are generally supplied—often in great variety; and of the making of courses of study there is no end. But a systematic study plan in which these two essential elements are properly dove-tailed is yet to be developed for most schools.

One of two main conditions usually obtains. In the majority of schools, textbooks are given the right of

way, the teachers following them without much regard to a guiding outline. In more closely supervised schools, a course of study, generally overloaded, is driven by the directive forces along the main road, the texts being obliged to take to the sidewalk or to get entirely out of the way.

Neither of these plans is right. **Both study outline and texts are necessary to promote substantial progress.** Each should be made to reinforce the other. They should be brought together in a proper relationship.

Four important things the study outline should do for the teacher: 1. Give a general view of the whole course; 2. Mark plainly the part to be covered by each grade or class; 3. Bring into the clear the essentials to be emphasized; 4. Help teachers to use to the best advantage the texts and other materials provided.

Simplicity should mark the general study plan. If it is overcrowded with references and requirements it becomes a tangle of troubles. Bewildered by its multiplicity of directions, the teacher is most likely to throw it aside and go her own way. A complicated course of study, therefore, largely defeats its own purposes.

The course, generally speaking, should give guidance, not substance, for the working out of the lessons. It cannot be both a series of texts and a study plan in one; but it may be most helpful in reinforcing the texts and in giving directions that assist teachers in adapting them best to the general scheme of things.

The ordinary teacher, after all, must use textbooks. She will generally get better results, too, by following a good text, not slavishly but rather faithfully. Such a

text, in itself, is an enriched course of study in that subject. It certainly will give a more systematic presentation of the materials and more helpful lessons than the overworked teacher has time to provide, even if she has the ability.

There are some teachers who feel that they need neither texts nor courses to guide them. Casting these common things aside, they go their individual ways, and sometimes make a brilliant success of their work. But it is of the comet variety, a vanishing splendor, much to be admired, but impossible to follow.

Coöperative work cannot be done with such teachers. If each may fling aside texts and study plans, what sure means has the teacher of succeeding grades of knowing the ground that has been covered? How can supervisors and superintendents hold the work to the essential continuity unless teachers do follow a series of worthy texts according to the general plan provided? Some sensible limitations must govern the individual teacher.

This does not mean that freedom cannot prevail. It must prevail if progress is to be made. Every corps of teachers needs inspiring leadership. **The course of study should be flexible enough to permit any teacher to exercise some individuality and to follow out promising experiments within the boundaries of common sense and common good.** Such freedom will be generously granted if the course of study is, as it should be, truly democratic. A definite yet flexible study plan is the thing most needed.

To construct such a course in language is no easy task.

This subject in itself is the most complicated of all—embodying as it does both oral and written composition with all of the different entangling alliances of each in the form of grammar, punctuation, enunciation, vocabulary building, spelling, literature, and other kindred studies.

The more or less indefinite nature of language adds also to the difficulty. It cannot be so readily blocked out into definite divisions as can mathematics, geography, history, or science. Attempts to mark off parts of the subject for the various grades to cover have usually resulted in throwing undue emphasis on the formal side of the work. More natural guide lines must be found to lead us out of these difficulties.

Another thing adds to the complexities of making a language course. The subject is so interwoven with every other subject as to be a vital part of each. **Language is the chief means of communication in every other study, and the expression side of most of them.** It is the central subject of the curriculum. To make a satisfactory course in language, therefore, is largely to outline the whole course of study.

Language work should reinforce every other study in the schoolroom. Rightly planned it becomes not a burden but a benefit to the curriculum, reinforcing the whole structure in much the same way that the steel framework reinforces the modern business block. To construct such a building requires the clear-sighted planning of the architect, the wise guidance of the superintendent of construction, and the intelligent workmanship of the laborers. It likewise takes rightly directed

team work to plan and carry to successful completion such a course of study as herein described.

The following are some of the vital problems to be solved in the achievement:

1. What is the foundational principle on which language training should be based?
2. How can the composition content of the course be best correlated with the other subjects of the curriculum?
3. How can literature and language be blended to the advantage of both subjects?
4. What shall be the relation of oral to written work?
5. What exercises shall be planned to give necessary drills in speech and writing?
6. How can grammar be effectively taught without dominating the course?
7. What vocabulary building exercises shall be given and how?
8. By what practical methods can the art of authorship be best cultivated and turned to service by our schools?

A satisfactory solving of these vital problems is the necessary first step in working out a systematic study plan in language. With these questions answered, the field may be more intelligently mapped out, each grade assigned its rightful part of the work, and proper standards set for each division of the school to achieve.

The demand for such a well organized, forward-moving language course is nation-wide. Superintendents, supervisors, and teachers everywhere are calling

for a workable plan by following which they may co-operate more successfully and teach more effectively our national speech.

The plan, to win popular approval, must achieve at least these desired results:

1. Articulate more closely the work of grade and high schools.
2. Distribute the language duties rightly.
3. Give plainer objectives to be achieved by each division of the school.
4. Economize time and effort by proper correlation with the various subjects, and by the elimination of nonessentials.
5. Make the various studies within the language group reinforce one another better.

In a word, the plan must make possible more effective team work in the teaching of our mother tongue.

The "Progressive Course in Language" that follows has been worked out to meet this national need. It provides a way by which teachers may better work together in training pupils for serviceable self-expression. It is offered here as a working basis for discussion and further experiment.

The vital problems involved in this graphically presented plan are all dealt with concretely in the succeeding chapters of this book.

A Progressive Course in Language

Read from the bottom up

SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

COURSES IN LIVING LITERATURE AND APPLIED COMPOSITION

Directing Expression More Definitely to Service

12 — Selected Classics Studied in Settings.
Public Speaking and Debating.
Story Studies, Story Telling (Elective).

11 — Literary Interpretation with Dramatics.
Elementary Journalism with Newspaper and Magazine Studies.
Commercial English—Oral and Written.

10 — Course in American Literature.
Speaking and Reading Course (Elective).
Composition—Oral and Written Topics.

JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

ESSENTIALS OF LANGUAGE

Making Sure the Fundamentals of Effective Language

9 — Socialized Studies in Composition.
Socialized Studies in Literature (Classic and Current), with Course in Library Work.

8 — Systematic Course in Practical Grammar — Applied in Oral and Written Composition.
Standard Selections from Living Literature and Directed Library Readings.

7 — Paragraph and Sentence Building and Vocabulary Studies—Applied in Live Composition Work.
Reading of Choice Selections in Living Literature — with Guided Home Readings.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

LANGUAGE LESSONS—ORAL AND WRITTEN

Fixing Right Habits of Speech

6 — Elementary Composition on Topics Connected Closely with Out-of-School and In-School Life of Pupils.
Beginnings in Practical Grammar, Punctuation, and Vocabulary.
Studies in Literature for Children and Home Readings.

5 — Beginnings in Paragraph Building on Live Topics.
Correct Usage Lessons and Drills to Fix Right Speech Habits.
Studies in Literature for Children—with Home Readings.

4 — Oral Composition in Interesting Topics—Beginnings in Written Work.
Sentence and Vocabulary Building—Correct Usage Exercises and Drills.
Story Studies and Story Telling—with Dramatization of Stories.

PRIMARY SCHOOL

INFORMAL LESSONS IN LANGUAGE—MAINLY ORAL—BLENDED WITH OTHER WORK

Right Beginnings in Self Expression

3 — Conversation Lessons—Telling and Playing Stories—Beginnings in Writing.
Language Games and Drills for Correct Usage—Vocabulary Exercises.
Studies in Reading, with Beginnings of Home Reading. Memory Work.

2 — Conversation Lesson on Topics Close to Child Life — Telling and Playing Stories.
Language Games and Drills for Tongue Training. Vocabulary Work.
Reading Lessons with Enunciation Exercises and Memory Work.

1 — Language Talks on Simple Topics—Telling and Playing Stories.
Language Games and Drills—with Word Games for Vocabulary Building.
Beginnings in Reading—with Memory Exercises and Phonics.

KINDERGARTEN AND HOME

THE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Primary language work of necessity must be almost entirely oral. Only a few first steps in written expression can be taken in these grades. These beginnings should be so made as not to create discouragement and dislike for written composition.

Freedom and spontaneity should not be sacrificed for form. "Fluency first, then fluency with accuracy," is a good guide to follow. Correction should be aimed, not at killing the pupil's natural expression, but at bringing it up to its best.

The subjects chosen should connect closely with child life. The pupil's home activities, his experiences with friends and playmates, his recreation, the holidays, the community life, and the great out-of-doors, all teem with topics of first-hand interest. The work of the primary teacher is largely the directing of his natural talk about these natural subjects.

Language lessons in these beginning grades should be closely correlated with other studies. Reading, spelling, phonics, geography, history, nature, art, may well be blended with language expression.

Purposeful play should be used to inspirit the work. Dramatizing stories, playing language games, creating plays, will be found most interesting and serviceable exercises for little folk.

The central aim in all primary language lessons should be to cultivate ease and spontaneity in the use of speech. Children should be made to feel "at home," and encouraged to express their own thoughts and feel-

ings for the sake of informing and interesting others. They should be tactfully guided away from wrong forms without being made self-conscious and halting in their use of speech.

THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Language work in the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades should be mainly oral. Well defined lessons in written work, however, should also be given here. The oral and written work should be closely connected.

Fluency and spontaneity is still the central aim. The pupil's natural expression should be cultivated, but with closer attention to the training of both tongue and fingers to use right forms of speech.

Corrective and preventive exercises should connect closely with the learner's real-life language. Exercises and drills to develop and to fix right language habits should grow out of the needs of the pupil as they are revealed in his speech and writing.

Composition lessons should lead the learner to express himself, not for the sake of expression, but for the sake of serving a real-life purpose. The subjects should be drawn from real life, and they may be correlated closely with other studies to advantage.

Vocabulary work, enunciation exercises, and lessons in grammar should be more systematically given than in preceding grades. A building up of the essentials of speech may well begin here.

The central aim is still to cultivate fluency, but **fluency with accuracy.** The emphasis should still be upon freedom of expression, but the pupil should be

guided tactfully to sureness of speech, and correct usage should be fixed in his tongue and fingers by directed drills to prevent and to overcome type errors in language.

THE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

In the Junior High School, oral and written work should both receive definite attention. The emphasis still should be on oral work. Each of these forms of expression should be made to reinforce the other.

Socialized studies in composition and literature should be the predominant work in this division of the school. The learner here may be thrown upon his individual responsibility to work out his thought contributions in speech and writing for the class.

Systematic studies in vocabulary building, grammar, punctuation, and enunciation should also characterize the course here. The aim should be to give the student a solid foundation for right habits of speech.

The essentials of speech taught should be vitalized by application to the learner's daily life language.

The composition work should be given real meaning and real life purpose. Every lesson should be aimed definitely at service.

The chief objective in the Junior High School should be to give pupils a mastery of the essentials of effective speech. Before the student is ready to do effective work in the advanced grades he should—

1. Have command of a good working vocabulary.
2. Be able to read fluently and accurately.
3. Have a clear and practical knowledge of the essentials of grammar.

4. Be able to build clear and correct sentences and paragraphs to express his own thoughts.

5. Punctuate properly and enunciate clearly.

6. Speak clearly and interestingly on topics that connect closely with his life.

SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

Real life purpose should even more clearly characterize the various courses in English offered in the Senior High School.

Differentiation of these courses into clearly defined work along lines of composition and literature and oral expression can be made here.

Definiteness should mark these different courses. Most of them may be but a semester in length. Better a brief course with a clear objective than the rambling about in literary circles and the reviewing of elementary English, which too often characterize the high school work.

The plan suggested for this division of the school can be readily adapted to varying conditions. The essential thing to be kept in mind is this:

Let Senior High School English be made to mean really serviceable self-expression.

Each of the various studies proposed in the progressive course offers opportunity for expression that counts for something in school and in community life. Students in this division of the school should be trained to take a real part in the world. Their language and literary activities can be made an excellent means to help them do this most effectively.

QUESTIONS

1. What is the essential thing to be kept in mind in making a unified language study plan?

2. Why are both the general outline and suitable texts necessary in promoting the course of study?

3. Why must every teacher for her own good as well as that of the school work coöperatively with other teachers?

4. What democratic freedom is necessary to promote progress?

5. Why is it especially necessary to keep the language course unified, giving to each grade its rightful part in the program, and making it move by progressive steps to the accomplishment of the main purposes in view?

6. What are the leading problems involved in making a unified course of study in language?

EXERCISES

1. Write briefly on each of the following points: a. Three main purposes of the language course of study; b. What general part in working out the course may best be played by the primary school; by the elementary school; by the junior high school; by the senior high school? Have a round table discussion of these points.

2. Show clearly why language may be called the central subject of the curriculum. What does the satisfactory working out of the language course mean to the whole course?

3. Secure two good courses of study in language. Make a brief outline of each showing the grade-by-grade plan of work: a. In composition. b. In practical grammar. c. In vocabulary work.

4. Study the courses also from these viewpoints: a. How do they connect language with life? b. In what way do they correlate language with other studies? c. Are the plans so made as to bring about effective coöperation?

III

GETTING RIGHT RESULTS IN COMPOSITION

The central aim of the language lesson is to lead the learner to express himself—not some one else—and to help him to efficiency in serviceable self-expression.

CONNECTING COMPOSITION WITH LIFE

Skill in speech and in writing comes only through well directed practice in genuine self-expression. Every class may give such practice if the teacher, holding to this central principle of language teaching, will make the thought development side of the recitation not a parrot-like repetition of the printed page, nor an echoing of the teacher's ideas, but an opportunity for the pupils to express their own thoughts and experiences.

Composition work has been too largely imitative and reproductive. It has been based too much on the book, too little on life, consisting in the main of retelling stories, memorizing and paraphrasing poems, rewriting the thoughts and experiences of others—with a picture lesson thrown in occasionally for the sake of variety.

Life calls for a decidedly different kind of training. It demands original, spontaneous self-expression. To meet the constantly changing situations in everyday activities, men must have initiative, and individuality in speech, consistent always with courtesy and good usage.

Language work based on literature alone does not give adequate training. To confine a pupil to copying literary models, no matter how perfect, is to give him but a narrow development in the art of using speech. It may be helpful at times to imitate literary models; but composition work to serve the purposes of life must be mainly constructive and creative.

Efficient training in the use of language comes from using it as in real life. To train the pupil to speak well, we must let him speak about subjects of first-hand interest to him—speak under the impulse of a true motive, and we must help him the while to speak effectively. This, in essence, is live language teaching.

Children are full of things to express. Every day brings them thoughts and experiences which they are constantly endeavoring to convey to others. It is the business of the teacher to discover the worth-while thoughts of the learner, to give him a chance to express them, and to train him to express them well.

This fundamental principle of language pedagogy was first made clear to the writer by an experience he once had in teaching a high school class in English. When the work was begun, he taught composition as it had been taught to him, by basing it for the most part on the classics.

The language work was made merely a handmaid of literature. The students were required to paraphrase striking parts of poems; to re describe in their own words "Ichabod Crane," "Scrooge," "Sir Roger de Coverley," and other characters in literature; to retell "The Merchant of Venice," "Silas Marner," and other stories; and regularly, during a certain year of the course, they were obliged to rewrite the "Autobiography of Franklin," paragraph by paragraph.

These lessons brought some worthwhile results, it is true. The mistakes in grammar, punctuation, and spelling were corrected; the tangles in sentence structure were straightened out; and various other language needs

were cared for—all for the benefit of the class in general, and of the writer of the paragraph in particular. The students were rather effectively trained by this process to handle written forms of English. But it was certainly a dry grind both for them and for the teacher, and the work all smacked decidedly of the book.

One day, in sheer desperation to escape the monotony of these imitative exercises, the teacher threw them aside, and began to read from a volume of nature sketches by John Burroughs, called "Bird Enemies." As he was reading the little incidents in which the writer tells how birds are killed, one boy raised his hand.

"What is it, Albert?"

"Why, I saw birds killed in an unusual way once."

"How was that?"

"Well, I used to go hunting quail, and every morning, as I took my gun to tramp over the fields, an old hawk would rise from the cliff near our ranch and begin to circle above me. When I scared up a bunch of quail, he would dive down and get his breakfast."

"Oh, I saw a snake once swallowing a young meadow lark," said another boy. Then another and another and another wanted to talk. Before the lesson was over, half the class had given some interesting first-hand experience with birds and their enemies.

"Why, you boys and girls might make a book of bird stories," the teacher suggested. "Suppose you begin it now by each writing for to-morrow your best story about how birds are killed."

The students, thus stimulated, went enthusiastically at the written work. Next day they were given an

opportunity to read the results. **Every one had something real to tell.** The expression was often crude, but always it was spontaneous, individual, full of life. One boy had an interesting story about an eagle.

"Your experience, Will," said the teacher, "was much like that of Mr. Burroughs."

"Yes, I saw about the same thing," responded the boy.

"What is the difference between your stories?"

"Oh, he knows how to tell it; I don't," came the frank reply.

"But your story can be brightened and made clearer and richer. Let us try it."

The class began to help Will improve his paragraph, with the result that a very readable little composition was soon made. Then the Burroughs sketch was read again with a keen, kindred interest.

The pupils had caught something of the spirit of authorship. But more; they were made to feel that they had something in their own lives worth saying, and they took delight in trying to say it well. They also revealed a wealth of life that the book-bound teacher seldom touches—the life beyond the school.

"The day is coming," says Dr. Winship, "when we shall give the child credit for what is in his brains whether the teacher puts it there or not." A great thought plainly put. This also is true: The language lesson is the best place to discover what the pupil has gained in thought and experiences outside of the schoolroom.

These out-of-school experiences offer the best possible

material for original and serviceable composition. They are individual and vital. From the realm of his own real life alone can the pupil contribute real thoughts to others.

The general lack of success in composition teaching and the common dislike of this work may be accounted for right here. The study has been driven along artificial lines of expression. Pupils have been obliged to talk and to write on subjects in which they had no inherent interest. The results could scarcely be other than unnatural and generally unsatisfactory.

Language lessons, to have a challenging appeal for the youthful learner, must come within the circle of his interests. They must afford him opportunity to discuss living issues, to relate his worth-while experiences, to express his natural thoughts and feelings. The themes for composition must come from within the compass of his own youthful world.

What is the world of youth? In one sense, it is the same as that of older folk. He lives under the same sky with them; he sees the same scenes; he listens to the same language; he participates in the same general activities. It is true he sees the world through the eyes of youth, and interprets what he sees with a youthful mind; but his general interests follow the basic lines of all human interest.

The world of youth is a dramatic world. The youth is constantly imitating in realistic play the doings of his elders. He makes his world one of eager activity, full of tense, yet naturally hopeful struggles. It is characterized too by honest, earnest expression of real thought

and feeling. He is continually discussing questions that affect his interests; solving seriously the fundamental problems of life as they relate to his own realm of thought and action.

A decent respect for the right of youth to discuss his own life problems would greatly help to put real life into composition work. More confidence on the part of teachers in the worth of the opinions of their pupils would call forth the best from these young lives. A freer in-pouring of the real thoughts and experiences of the learner into the class work would enrich and democratize the recitation, and give to the language lesson the zeal that brings right results.

QUESTIONS

1. What is the most pressing language need for every person?
2. Why is composition work based on books alone not adequate to meet this need?
3. How can the learner best be trained to use language skillfully to express his own thoughts and feelings?
4. In what way does the real language lesson offer opportunities to turn the real-life interests of the learner to educative account?
5. How is the child world like that of adults? In what respect does it differ from the adult world?
6. Why must composition lessons be connected closely with life?

EXERCISES

1. Choose from among schoolroom papers a composition which shows clearly that the pupil was not expressing his own thoughts. Select another that shows genuine self-expression produced under the stimulus of a true life motive. Make a com-

parative study of these two types of compositions. In what essentials do they differ?

2. Plan and teach a composition lesson that connects closely with the life of your pupils. Give it a natural motive, and be ready to report the result.

LIFE LINES IN LANGUAGE

When the pioneer went West, he found the mountain streams following their natural courses and losing themselves in the wastes. He made new channels, following generally the old natural waterways. Then, leading the streams along these, he spread the life-giving waters over the parched plain and "made the desert blossom as the rose."

Following the pioneer came the electrical engineer. He saw the leaping waters wasting their energy and turned this natural force to other service. Building great pipe lines along the canyon walls, he led the waters to a certain point and let them make one mighty leap down through the turbines to turn the dynamos and generate electricity. The sparkle and energy of the streams was thus transformed into electric light and power.

The educational process is not unlike these practical processes. **The chief business of the school is to utilize the natural activities of the pupil in training him for the work of life.**

Teachers have surely been slow in turning the natural currents of language expression to educative account. Engrossed in the book side of their work, they have neglected to study the learner's real life, much less to direct the expression of that life to serviceable ends. We shall come one day, it is hoped, to realize more

keenly the profound educational significance of the Biblical phrase, "And a little child shall lead them."

Composition work, to be most successful, must parallel rather closely the life lines in language. If it is to give really vital training it must deal with the native interests of the learner. If it is to be valuable, it must direct his natural expression into channels that lead towards real life service.

What are the natural language life lines? What are the subjects on which the pupils are constantly expressing themselves? What are the native interests of youth?

At first glance there would seem to be a multitude of these interests. The activities of young people multiply into the millions. Each one seems to be following his own special interests. Yet all of these various interests naturally follow along a few basic life lines.

These fundamental lines of natural expression are unchangeable. They will be found running through the great elemental human interests, which remain the same throughout the years. Man, for example, has always had an interest in travel, no matter what the means of locomotion, whether afoot or on horseback, by wagon or by rail, in automobile or in airship. The interest in changing scenes and in new experiences occasioned by the journey has remained constant. Likewise his fundamental interest in nature, in recreation, in the drama, in the industrial activities, and in other things of common appeal, has remained constant.

The first thing necessary in planning a course in composition is to determine what are these basic interests. The second essential is to mark the best way along which

the natural currents of expression may be directed towards the accomplishing of the central purposes of true education.

What these fundamental interests are may be variously stated. There must be general agreement, however, that the following outline suggests most of the things of common and constant appeal:

1. **Recreation**—Outdoor sports and games, hunting and fishing, indoor pastimes, holiday celebrations, plays, shows, music, and other recreative activities.

2. **Nature**—Animal, bird, insect, reptile and water life, the woods, prairies, streams, hills, canyons, lakes, ocean, the stars, and all other natural phenomena.

3. **Companionship**—Family, playmates, people of the neighborhood, school, and social circle.

4. **Work of the World**—Various human activities connected with making and producing, buying, selling and transporting the commodities of the world; as, farming, ranching, mining, manufacturing, railroading, shipping, building, inventing, trading.

5. **Peoples and Places**—Folk of other lands, strange customs, travel and tales of travel, life in city and country.

6. **Historical Tales**—Local history, stories of the fireside, stories of state and country, stories of other lands, romance of human struggle and achievement.

7. **Civic Activities**—Work of the policeman, fireman, soldier, sailor, postman, and others connected with civic duties.

8. **Literature and Art**—Stories, poems, authors and their books, current literature, pictures, sculpture,

architecture, and other forms of literary and art expression.

The work in composition following these general guide lines correlates naturally with every essential study in the curriculum, and this is as it should be. Language work to strengthen itself must be interwoven with all of the other strong lines that make up the whole course of study.

Language expression, as already said, has been limited mostly to literary activities. Literature bears a close relationship to language, it is true; but so, too, does natural science, geography, history, the social and industrial studies, civics, hygiene, and other vital subjects that are included in the enriched course. From all these sources, impelling themes may be drawn for such vitalized language training as best prepares pupils to use speech with skill and purpose.

This rich composition content must be well organized, to be sure. Each grade should be given its proper share of the materials, selected and arranged according to the general capacity of the class. In other words, a progressive program of expression work along the various vital lines should be made to provide for a steady forward movement in the work throughout the grades.

Lack of such a progressive plan has caused the composition work largely to go in circles. Without it teachers, being more or less at sea, have taken whatever they liked best or could get most easily. As a result different grades would often be talking and writing on the same subjects in the same way. Such interest-killing repetition is unnecessary. The subject matter

may easily be varied from year to year and given in the form best fitted to the growth of the class. Yet the essential lines of interest may be followed faithfully in progressing towards the educative end in view.

The value thus of correlating language systematically with other studies has not been generally appreciated. It may yet come to be keenly realized that through correlative composition work lies a way to unify the whole course, to economize effort, and to enforce the various lessons to be taught. The educative value of properly directed expression can scarcely be over-estimated.

Recreation may be doubly enriched, through tactfully guided language work. Beginning with the simple plays of childhood and following through the varying recreative activities, the growing learner should be given opportunity first to talk of his pleasures, to tell of his liveliest experiences in games and sports, and secondly, to join in creating plays and games for the entertainment of himself and others. During such delightful lessons, the opportunities will be many to stimulate a love for wholesome recreation, and through it to cultivate habits that lead to health and happiness. The development of the art of self entertainment growing out of such work is also invaluable.

An intelligent love of nature in her various manifestations can likewise be most effectively cultivated through correlating language and nature study. To make opportunity for pupils to tell of their observations and experiences in the great out-of-doors, is not only to open their eyes, their ears, and their hearts rightly toward nature, but to turn their actions toward prac-

tical service in the conservation of natural resources. The wealth of material to be found here for every grade can be so given as to make the work, not a mere marking of time, but a forward moving course leading along this great line of interest steadily upward through all the grades.

Following the historical life line also, the pupil may be led first through the simple home history, on through the local history stories of community and state, to the history of his country and the world at large. The end of all of this expression should be to cultivate in the learner proper appreciation of the pioneers, a sane hero worship, right ideals, and a practical patriotism that will express itself constantly in serviceable citizenship. Language and history may thus be correlated to the great advantage of both subjects.

Appreciation of the work of the world also may be cultivated through language work. Pupils like to talk about the industrial and other activities throbbing everywhere about them. Their experiences in watching or in participating in the various processes of making, doing, and producing may well be turned to educative account by stimulating the right attitude towards work in all of its essential phases. This rich source may readily supply ample materials fitted to develop the occupational interests of pupils of every grade for vitalized language lessons.

Literature offers still another rich source of supply for live composition lessons. To be alive, however, these lessons must be different from those ordinarily given, where language work is based on literature; they

must be more than merely reading and memorizing poems and reproducing tales. Language work based on literature should call forth, as should other language lessons, an expression of original thoughts and experiences, which may be directed towards some worthy social service. For illustration: A democratic discussion of such general subjects as "Favorite Authors," "Home Library Friends," "Springtime Tales," "Christmas in Song and Story," "Poems of Patriotism," "Hero Tales of Our Country," and other like inviting subjects would offer the best kind of language training. More than this, such lessons would give pupils opportunity to help guide their own reading habits into right channels.

Still another correlation of language with other subjects is possible through its use in connection with the other expression studies, art, and music. This blending may be brought about in two ways: First, by giving pupils opportunity to talk and write about artists and musicians and their works, and second, by using art in connection with their own compositions, and by setting to music some of the best poems created by the pupils themselves.

Interlacing thus with all of the various subjects, the composition course becomes a vital part of the whole curriculum. Such a course, following the natural life lines of expression, achieves four worthy things in one: 1. Composition work is developed according to the natural method; 2. The learner is assured his inherent right to express himself; 3. Every other course in the curriculum is reinforced and enriched through correla-

tion with language; 4. The natural expression of the pupil is guided into channels that lead to worthy service. Thus language work is restored to its true place in the educative process, and recognized as the finest means for social service that the race has developed.

QUESTIONS

1. What lessons for the teacher of language are to be found in the processes of irrigation and electrical engineering? Illustrate by reporting some language lesson you have observed wherein the natural expression of the pupils was directed towards serviceable ends.

2. Why must the composition work, to be both vital and valuable, follow the basic life lines of human interest?

3. What are the great elemental interests of humanity that have persisted throughout the changing years?

4. Show how a course of composition dealing with these essential interests correlates closely with practically all subjects in the best courses of study.

5. Name and explain each of the four objects attained by a properly vitalized course of study in language.

EXERCISES

1. Write ten general subjects which have an impelling natural interest for pupils (a) of the elementary school and (b) of junior and senior high schools.

Be ready to join with your associates in a discussion of these interests from the following viewpoints: 1. Which of the lines of interest persist throughout the school years? 2. How might these interests be turned to educative account in composition classes?

2. Let the class make a selection of some general subject of interest; as, "Travel," "Favorite Pastimes," "Folk Tales of the Community," "Industries." Let each member then choose an individual subject within the class subject and prepare a talk or

paper dealing with real life experiences. Share the results with the class.

3. Show how the editor, the minister, the leader of boys' or girls' clubs, the athletic coach, the nurse, the salesman must appeal to life lines of interest to be successful.

LEADING THE LEARNER TO EXPRESS HIMSELF

To create conditions wherein the pupil feels **impelled**—not **compelled**—to express himself, is the essential first step towards success in language teaching. Two things are necessary to get this spontaneous self-expression: 1. A subject that connects vitally with the life of the learner; 2. Natural stimulus through question and suggestion. Sometimes mere mention of the subject is sufficient to start the pupils talking. The work of the teacher then is simply that of directing expression along desired lines. At other times this lead is not enough; pupils must be given suggestions and helps to be induced to express themselves freely.

Five general ways offer themselves as aids to the teacher here: 1. **Personal experiences**; 2. **Suggestive questions and topics**; 3. **Literature close to child life**; 4. **Pictures and objects**; 5. **Field trips and other activities.**

Of these, the **personal experience** is generally most effective. To illustrate, a certain sixth grade teacher, in leading his class to tell of their experiences with wild animals, began the lesson by relating how he had once watched two chipmunks stealing grain from a box. Thinking to catch the little fellows, he had slipped a board over the opening; but when he tried to grab the chipmunks, they flashed up his arm and escaped. A few moments later they came in again. This time, how-

ever, only one went into the box. The other stood guard, and at the least movement of their enemy, the little sentinel would sound the alarm and both would skip to safety.

A big boy in the back of the room began to wave his hand excitedly. He was given a chance to speak.

"Why,—why,—I could-a told you how to caught those chipmunks," he said.

"How would you have done it, John?"

"Why, I'd-a took a gunny sack and put over the hole, and they'd-a jumped in the sack, and then I'd-a had'em."

"You seem to have caught chipmunks, my boy," the teacher suggested.

"Oh, yes, lots o' times."

"Have you ever caught anything else?"

"I've trapped a lot of squirrels."

The other boys and girls began to get interested. It was seldom that John, who had been held back a year or two because he couldn't pass the regular work, expressed himself. The pupils listened eagerly as he told how he trapped squirrels.

"Have you ever trapped any other animal?" the teacher asked.

"Trapped coyotes with father all one winter," responded John.

Then the other boys and girls began to ply the boy with questions. They held him for nearly half an hour telling of his experiences. He was a natural born trapper. From that day on, John began to grow in his work. The language lesson had opened the way for the real John to express himself.

The teacher who keeps alive the experiences of youth has always a kind of magic wand with which to call forth the life of the youthful learner. A living interest in things that interest the one being taught more than all else is likely to enkindle a desire in the pupil to express himself.

Next to a well told personal experience, the **"fetching question"** seems most effective in stimulating self-expression. Language questions should be something more than mere matter of fact queries. Many teachers waste time with such empty interrogations as, "How many of you have seen a horse?" The answer is a show of hands. But ask the question, "What is your most exciting experience with a horse?" or, "What is the most intelligent thing you ever saw a horse do?" The answer to such a question is a story.

The question is one of the main tools in teaching. By means of it the pupil may be led to reveal his thoughts, feelings, experiences, and mental needs. With it also the teacher is enabled not only to arouse but to direct the pupil's expression. It, therefore, makes both an excellent starter and a steering gear for the language lesson.

But to stimulate thought and to guide it along right channels the question must be thoughtfully made and rightfully aimed. It is an old saying that "any fool can ask questions that no wise man can answer." The questions of the fool nevertheless are generally as empty as the brain that conceives them. A thoughtful question springs from the thoughtful mind. Such questions alone beget thought.

Skill to shape the "fetching question" is one of the prime essentials in teaching. Too many teachers seem not to appreciate this. As a result they do not try seriously to cultivate such skill. They are continually asking questions that get the class nowhere except perhaps through a few non-important facts about the lesson. A little practice each day in making thought-impelling questions would increase greatly the efficiency of any teacher, and bring far better results from the class.

Closely allied to the question as a stimulus to expression is the **suggestive topic.** For the sake of variety, the language lesson may at times be opened with a list of topics from which the pupil may choose. For example:

A Runaway	Troubles of a Camp Cook
A Lost Child	A Police Problem
A Boat Trip	Caught in a Storm
A Bad Blaze	A Laughable Upset
An Accident	A True Fish Story

Pupils usually respond freely to such stimuli with interesting word pictures or incidents from real life.

Poems and stories have long been made a basis for language work. Two faults, however, have marked the use of this material. In the first place, the literature has not been close to the learner's life; and secondly, as already pointed out, it has been used almost entirely for reproduction and memorization.

Literature should be read not for imitation but for inspiration. In the language lesson it may be both a stimulus to expression and a standard of measurement. This double use of literature was clearly illustrated in

the lesson sketched in a preceding chapter on "How Birds are Killed."

Stories or poems used to stimulate self-expression, as there shown, must touch the learner's interests in some vital way. They should be choice, of course, but not too far removed from present day experiences. Stevenson's "Swing," Riley's "Little Mandy's Christmas Tree," or "A Winter Night" by Mary F. Butts, are illustrative of poems for this purpose, effective with primary grades. Stories like "The Leak in the Dike" by Phoebe Cary, "The Little Post Boy" by Bayard Taylor, "The Thanksgiving Turkey" by Clara and Will Vawter, "The Pea Blossom" by Hans Christian Andersen, "Luke Varnum" by Burritt, are likewise very effective in leading pupils to talk or to write. With upper grades, an occasional story hour, or the dramatization of some choice tale brings rich language returns.

In using literature for language work, the self-expression idea should be kept foremost. The poem or story must lead the learner to express himself, not some one else, if it is to result in the truest language training. Enjoy the selection being used as a stimulus to such expression, but make it a means to the end of drawing out the learner's own thoughts and experiences.

The instance cited of the John Burroughs' selection shows how this thought applies in the high school. The following illustration points its application in the lower grades. Suppose the poem being used for language purposes is "A Winter Night" by Mary F. Butts. One stanza from the poem will suffice for illustration:

"Blow Wind blow,
Drift the flying snow,
Send it twirling, whirling overhead.
There's a bedroom in a tree
Where snug as snug can be
The squirrel nests in his cozy bed."

The picture of this cozy comfort may be enjoyed, the music of the lines also; but the stanza should call out the children's experiences with squirrels. Where have you seen their nests? What other nests of mice or rabbits or other animals have you seen? Where were they? A stimulus of this sort is most likely to call forth a great many interesting experiences. Illustrations to demonstrate the proper use of literature in language work might be multiplied.

All that has been said of literature applies with equal force to the use of art in language teaching. Picture studies have been a favorite means of promoting expression. But here again two faults prevail: either the pictures are out of the realm of child life; or they are so used as to be merely picture lessons, nothing more. Some language practice comes from the discussion of them, but it usually is of the matter of fact sort.

In a certain school the teacher held up the well known picture called "Can't You Talk?" The little folks were asked to give a name for the baby, and one for the dog, to tell whether it was summer or winter, whether the babe and dog were on the porch or in the house, what color the baby's eyes were. So the lesson proceeded until a visitor who was observing the lesson was asked to speak to the class. Holding up the same

picture, he asked, "What is this picture about?" The pupils did not know. It was brought closer to them and one bright boy, seeing the sentence beneath it, flung his hand up excitedly.

"It says 'Can't You Talk?' "

"Who in the picture is saying 'Can't you talk?' "

"The baby, of course."

"What does the dog say?"

"He doesn't say anything. Dogs can't talk."

"You don't think so. How many of you think dogs can talk?"

No hands came up.

"Well, as I was going to a house the other day a big dog bounded towards me and said sharply, 'Bow wow!' What do you think he said?"

"He said, 'Go 'way!' " said one pupil.

Immediately there was a waving of hands; the pupils were full of experiences to tell how dogs had talked to them.

Pictures that touch closely the learner's life may be used with good effect in stimulating language expression. At one time the writer used for this purpose a "kodak snapshot" of some little folk who were building a play house out of "goods boxes." In a very few moments nearly every pupil in that third grade was eager to tell of some playhouse he had built.

The old method of using pictures to stimulate some imaginary story usually brought only a weak, mechanical result. The practice of using classic pictures for language work was also generally barren of returns, because the work was in every way foreign to the learner.

There is great need for a better joining of the art and language interest. Some excellent work is being done in this direction by bringing into our schools graded picture studies. There is still room for much to be done to bring the pictures that have a real appeal and uplift for youth into the halls of learning; and yet more to do in blending art and language work to the advantage of both.

QUESTIONS

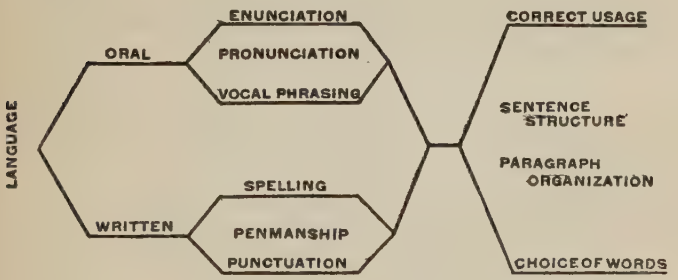
1. What spirit must every teacher possess to lead pupils effectively to express themselves?
2. What main characteristics must the language lesson have to bring forth the desired response from the learners?
3. Tell of some experience of your own wherein you have been successful in stimulating a satisfactory discussion from the pupils. To what mainly did you ascribe your success?
4. Show clearly the difference between teaching a selection in literature merely as a reading lesson and making that same selection serve to stimulate language expression.
5. How may pictures best be used to stimulate the pupils to interesting self-expression?

EXERCISES

1. Select some worth while subject close to the life of the pupils of any grade. Compose the questions you might use in leading the class to talk effectively on the subject.
2. Write a brief experience of your own which might well be used in stimulating a class to fruitful expression on some subject of value to them. Try it with a class and be ready to report results and discuss them with your associates.
3. Make a list of ten of the most interesting topics you find discussed in current magazines and newspapers. What in each of these topics appeals strongly to the reader?

BLENDING ORAL AND WRITTEN WORK

Oral and written expression should be so taught as constantly to complement and reinforce each other. These two phases of language work are one in general purpose. The difference between talking with the tongue and with the pen lies for the most part in the mechanics. The following diagram, showing some of the essentials that make for skill in each, indicates the closeness of the relationship.



Well directed practice in speaking promotes efficiency in writing. A story well told is half written. Oral discussion of the essay to be prepared paves the way for a more effective paper. Likewise to write the work in outline or in full is to reinforce and clarify the oral presentation of it. Both of these kinds of expression are necessary to round out the learner's language skill.

Speech makes for fluency; writing for accuracy. Lord

Bacon long ago expressed this point very plainly when he said, "Conversation maketh the ready man; writing the exact man." These two qualities in language may be gained best by well correlated practice in both oral and written work.

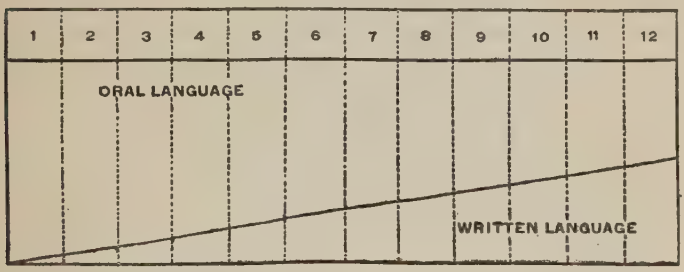
The most effective speakers both speak and write. **The best writers really speak to unseen audiences.** "A sentence can never be most effectively written," says one authority in composition, "unless the author hears it as he writes."

These two phases of language should be developed together. Teachers too often have thought of them apart and have planned their work accordingly. It would be far better for both, an economy of time and effort as well, to bring them together. This may readily be done.

The path to effective written expression lies through the spoken word. The opening lesson in developing a composition should generally be an oral exercise. This is especially necessary with grade pupils; and it obtains even through the high school. Pupils usually need the stimulus of discussion to open up the subject, to thresh the wheat from the chaff of their thoughts. A well directed lesson is a kind of discovery exercise. It helps the teacher to find the vein of the child's richest thoughts and experiences. It helps the child to discover his own best ideas and stories.

With little folk in the primary grades, there can be little else than oral composition. With even the pupils of grammar grades and high school, there should be far more practice in speaking than is usually afforded.

The following diagram illustrates what would seem a sensible progressive proportion of these two kinds of language expression throughout the elementary and secondary schools.



Suggested proportion of oral to written work in each of the twelve grades.

This emphasis on speech is urged because **oral language is largely the language of life.** The ordinary person speaks at least a thousand times more than he writes. Most of our communication is through the spoken word. Most of the language mistakes are of the tongue rather than of the fingers. For these and other reasons the greater emphasis should be laid on cultivating in the pupil skill in oral language.

This necessary attention to speech need not rob written composition of its rightful share of attention. It will rather reinforce that work if properly taught. Effective teaching neglects neither kind of expression, but by bringing both into a reinforcing correlation "makes one hand wash the other."

The following suggestive plan, varied always to meet various grades and conditions, indicates how the oral

and written may be blended to advantage. Such a program may prove helpful especially in the grades from the third to the ninth.

1. **Opening oral exercise.** This recitation usually should be a conversation lesson or an informal discussion to stimulate interest in the general subject, to help each pupil discover his best story or topic and to start him on the way to develop it.

2. **Talks on chosen topics.** This lesson will vary according to the grade and the nature of the subject. Primary pupils can scarcely be held to systematic preparation of oral work. Their work will be mostly a spontaneous expression of thought or the relating of experiences. In upper grades, the pupils may be directed in gathering materials, and in preparing these for follow-up oral work. In these succeeding recitations they are given opportunity to present individually their enriched and better organized thoughts and experiences for the benefit of their classmates and for the perfecting of their own powers.

3. **Written exercises.** With little children written work will be reduced to a minimum. It should almost always follow closely the oral work and be done under the supervision of the teacher. Composition in all of the grades, indeed, would better be done mostly during supervised study periods. Even in high school, if students were given more tactful direction while working their thoughts out "on paper," they would make surer and swifter progress.

4. **Corrective exercises.** Just what these shall be will depend on the needs of the pupils. The oral and

written work will indicate clearly where help is wanted in enunciation, spelling, punctuation, grammar, diction, or in other phases of language. Several lessons based on the pupils' talks and papers may well be planned in connection with blended oral and written composition exercises just suggested.

5. **Perfecting the work.** The aim of all the foregoing should be to bring both oral and written work to a resultful conclusion. From the preliminary exercises outlined should come the finished productions in speech and writing. A strong and natural motive will be necessary to keep alive the enthusiasm necessary to make pupils put their best into the work. This may be supplied rather readily in various forms.

Among the practicable ways of stimulating interest in both oral and written work, these stand out prominently:

1. **The Story Hour.** This has a never failing appeal. It may be adapted easily to fit the different grades and conditions. For example, there may be "Fairy Story Hours," "Wigwam Story Hours," "Spring Time, Fall Time, Snow Time, or Summer Time Story Hours." The various holidays also may be made the center for such work. There may also be "Fireside Story Hours," in which local history and stories, historical tales and literary stories from various story writers may be retold. The students may also use the story hour as a time to tell original stories.

2. **Dramatic work.** The application of this exercise is as various as that of story telling. It lends itself readily to all sorts of subjects; historical, geographical, literary, and other lines may be inspirited by it.

Dramatization has especial value in developing skill to speak. It promotes poise and ease and power to present thoughts vividly. Dr. R. G. Moulton, of the University of Chicago, used frequently to tell his students that to be effective as an orator one must have skill as an actor.

Speaking is portraying thoughts and feelings. The training for ability to do this should begin early, if pupils are finally to be natural and graceful speakers.

3. **Debates.** Here is another means of stimulating earnest speech effort. Under proper control the debating instinct may be turned to excellent account. The tendency to debate is especially strong in the grammar grade and high school age. Dr. John M. Tyler, speaking of the tendency in this period of life, once said, "The boy of the adolescent age would think earth an Eden if he could just debate as much as he pleased."

This tendency may be made a valuable means of training in public speech. Attractive opportunities for the development and direction of youthful energies may be provided in the form of "A Young Citizen's Forum," "Nature Clubs," "Literary Clubs," "Athletic Clubs," and other associations that open the way for motivated discussion and social expression. All these, however, are special activities. There must be daily practice if the work is to be most effectively done. The class itself must provide for most regular exercises.

The democratic recitation offers, after all, the best of practice in all forms of oral expression. In it informal debates are being constantly conducted. Experiences are continually being shared, and practice in public

speech is being given. Rightly directed, the recitation offers the best means for the development of skill in speech. The special exercises, however, should be employed frequently to renew and to stimulate the interest, and to bring language expression up to the crest of the pupils' powers of speech.

In written work also the aim should be to give the composition a respectful hearing. Not all written work can be read before real audiences, but much more of the choice work might be heard both in class and on special occasions if a little greater attention were given to the service side of such expression.

Pupils should be trained to write as well as to speak for some purpose that seems to them worth while. Stories should be written with the thought of giving others enjoyment. Plays should be written to be acted. Descriptive sketches should be prepared to be read. School newspapers should be produced for the real purpose of publishing worthy news and editorials of interest to the school. The best individual and class booklets containing perfected work of pupils may well be preserved by the pupils or by the school. Local literary and historical collections may thus be made.

Letter writing also should represent real work. Herein lies one of the most important of all the phases of written composition. It is a phase, however, that has been ineffectively dealt with because of the generally artificial nature of the exercises. The emphasis has been constantly given to the form side of the letter instead of to its content.

Letter writing means much more than merely writing

names and addresses. These things are only incidental to the main purpose—necessary, of course, but subordinate in importance to the chief purpose of the letter, which is to reach and interest, inform or convince the one to whom the letter is directed. A letter that fails to carry a real message is a failure.

The time spent in training pupils to write letters should be devoted mainly to helping them "put across" the message of the letter. Pupils should be trained to write for real readers, to say things of interest to them and to write clearly and convincingly. The letter writing practice, in brief, should be real and life-like.

A study needs to be made of the natural letters of youth. Most of the models provided by texts and teachers are of the grownup style or wholly artificial. If real practice is to be given, the letters used for stimulus and guidance must be closer to the life of the learner than those ordinarily given.

A study of real-life correspondence in the world of commerce will also prove helpful. "What sort of letters get results?" is the question that is constantly bothering business men. A great waste of time and money is made through ineffective correspondence. If schools would turn their language training to account, they might well divert some of the energies to a study and practice of efficiency in both social and business correspondence.

In letter writing as in all other types of composition, both oral and written work may well be blended. Time was when all letters were written; but to-day, most of the business correspondence is dictated either to sten-

ographers or to dictaphones. Ability to dictate a letter well is an art to be cultivated along with the development of ability to write letters. These two forms of expression should be developed together, each being a necessary complement of the other.

QUESTIONS

1. What elements have oral and written language in common? How do they differ?
2. What proportion of the time for the class period do you feel should be given to each of these types of composition? (a) In the elementary school? (b) In the junior high school?
3. How may the oral and the written work be blended? In what one practical way may we give more attention to speech training in our schools without neglecting the necessary written work?
4. Tell what effect the proper blending of oral and written work has on both these types of expression.
5. What is the most important thing in letter writing? How may the letter writing practice work be made to achieve real life results?

EXERCISES

1. Plan a talk on one of the following topics:
   The choicest story I have heard from older folk.
   An exciting experience of my own.
   Tales of travel.
   Stories of industry.

   Give the talk before some real audience at home, in school, or elsewhere; then write your sketch or story.

   Discuss with your associates the relative difficulties in creating the two types of composition and show how one exercise helps the other.

2. Make a list of the fair criticisms a good business man would pass on the letter writing in the grades; in the high school. What definite plan may be followed to make that work meet more effectively the needs of real life?

IV

CORRECTIVE WORK IN LANGUAGE

To stimulate in the pupil such a desire for choice and effective language as makes him strive constantly to use it—this is the chief aim of criticism.

THE SPIRIT AND AIMS OF CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM

Correction, to bring rich and lasting returns, must concern itself with more than marking mechanical mistakes in pupils' papers and in giving standard tests. This checking up of errors in speech is necessary; but the great end of corrective work is to give children skill to correct their own mistakes; to establish, through well-directed drills, right tongue habits; and above all, to inspire in them such a desire for choice, clear language as will make them strive constantly to use it.

If the spirit of the "self-starter" can be cultivated in the pupil, the problem is largely solved. Abraham Lincoln once attributed his mastery of English to the fact that even from childhood he would always get irritated when anyone talked to him in a way that he could not understand. This annoyance caused him constantly to keep trying to put his own thoughts so clearly that any boy of his acquaintance could get the meaning. It became a kind of passion with him to say things in choice yet simple language. Out of this effort came his crystal clear style.

Lincoln's method is not unusual. Franklin followed a similar plan of self-correction. Robert Louis Stevenson in "Memoirs and Portraits," speaking of his own self-development, says, "I was always busy on my own

private end, which was to learn to write. As I walked, my mind was constantly fitting what I saw with appropriate words; when I sat by the roadside, I would either read, or a pencil and version book would be in my hand, to note down the features of the scene or commemorate it in some halting stanzas. Thus I lived with words." Every master of our mother tongue has been an intelligent self-critic inspired with a desire to express himself effectively.

How to create in pupils some measure of a love for effective self-expression is the chief problem. It will never be solved by nagging, petty criticism. Criticism must be had, but always it should be constructive, inspirational of the child's best efforts. Other than this, it defeats its own purpose.

Appreciation or Criticism. Which? With too many teachers criticism is merely fault-finding. **Critic,** in the original meaning of the word, meant **judge. To criticise** means to **judge fairly.** The expression is almost synonymous with **appreciate,** which means, in one sense, to **appraise,** to rate at its true value. But what a difference in the atmosphere carried by the words **criticism** and **appreciation!** A change of terms might be helpful in bringing the right attitude to our corrective work. Instead of **criticising** the efforts of our pupils, why not **appreciate** them?

This is no plea for "soft pedagogy." Criticism may be just as searching, just as effective when given in the spirit of appreciation, as when dealt out in the spirit of the taskmaster. The resulting attitude, however, is vastly different. Right-spirited criticism leaves the

pupil working not against but with the teacher for the betterment of his own work.

The unskillful gardener, finding a rosebush choked with weeds, strikes down both roses and weeds. The skillful one, keeping his eye on the flowers, gently but thoroughly uproots the weeds and leaves the rosebush growing.

Criticism should always be constructive. An encouraging word in season, a helpful, forward-pointing suggestion, is far more successful in stimulating self-corrective effort in the pupil than a stinging slap or slur at the error or weakness in his work. Find the good point in the talk or the paper first, even though it takes a microscopic examination to do it. "That sentence is well constructed; let us make the others just as clear." "You used a choice word there; try to get others just as effective." Some such word of praise justly given, faces the pupil towards his own problem, willing to work to solve it, eager to overcome his own faults by building better.

Corrective work should also aim not so much at curing as at preventing mistakes. This cannot apply of course to the faults in speech with which a child may enter school, nor to those which he continues to pick up on the street and in the home; but there are certain bad language habits which are due directly to careless teaching. It is the business of teachers to work co-operatively to prevent pupils from acquiring such wrong habits.

This point finds especial application in written work. Over the beginning of oral language the school has little

control. The first steps in writing, however, are given by the teacher. If the child is trained wrongly in these, who except the teacher is responsible?

Write correctly at the first draft, is the target to be aimed at. Express yourself freely, say what you feel and think, but train yourself to say it accurately, correctly, without recopying. This high standard is not reached in a single bound, it is true. The beginning child will stumble much before he learns finally to walk or to run, but this end must be attained before he measures up to the practical efficiency demanded in the speech and in the writing of to-day. And this standard should be kept clearly in the minds of all teachers from the beginning.

Not only efficiency but spontaneous efficiency is the call of this electric age. Sixty per cent efficiency finds no choice places in this strenuously working world. It is the man who does his work rightly at the first stroke that is in constant demand.

The point finds many applications in daily uses of speech. The business man has no time to dictate his letters over again. The stenographer must learn to transcribe correctly at the first draft. Recopying is too costly a process. The news reporter likewise must develop skill to tell his stories effectively without rewriting them. The same is true of most of our daily speech. In conversation, in public debate, in doing business, to be effective one must be ever alert to say the right thing well. There is no time for studied expression. The spoken word cannot be recalled.

Our school exercises in English, to be most helpful,

must therefore provide abundant practice which trains children to express themselves freely, yet with precision. Much extemporaneous speaking on familiar and interesting subjects, many informal debates, frequent writing of letters within a given time limit, reporting news, story telling, and various other exercises aiming to develop fluency with accuracy should be given constantly.

In all of his writing, the pupil should be trained to work while he works. The common notion that poets and other literary geniuses allow their minds to wander aimlessly when they write is false. The best results come only when they work with attention focused and soul afire with feeling.

The Star-Spangled Banner was born in the midst of battle smoke. *Lead, Kindly Light, A Man's a Man for A' That,* Patrick Henry's *Appeal to Arms,* Lincoln's *Gettysburg Speech,* and hundreds of other gems that continue to thrill us almost leaped into being. **This is not to say that these or any other masterpieces were produced without preparation.** Quite the contrary: they were the result of years, perhaps, of accumulated thought and feeling and practice in expression. But when the right moment came, they were cast into fitting form quickly, while the soul was aglow.

The application of all this to corrective work is clear. Children working rapidly under the impulse of thought and feeling, produce better compositions than when they are allowed to dawdle over the exercise. Not only is their work more alive, but it is generally freer from mechanical mistakes.

One of many instances that might be cited in proof comes from the following demonstration lesson conducted in a certain sixth grade:

"What is the most exciting experience you have ever had?" was the opening question asked by the teacher.

It proved to be a "fetching question," for the pupils were suddenly set alert and thinking.

"Have you ever seen a fire, a runaway, or have you had a scare of some kind?"

Several hands were raised.

Henry was given a chance to speak.

"I was pretty badly excited last week watching that explosion out by the Warm Springs."

"What happened?"

"Well, us kids were climbing the hills above the Warm Springs when all of a sudden we saw a lot of people running away from the car tracks. Then we noticed a smoke coming out of one of the box cars. Then there was a big puff of black smoke and a few seconds later we heard the worst boom. It was a car of powder that exploded."

"Was any one hurt?"

"I don't think so; but the car was blown to pieces and a big hole was torn in the ground."

Other hands were waving now.

"Very well, John, what is your story?"

Another boy arose and told in rather vivid style how he had watched the great fire that swept away half a mining camp.

A girl named Virginia next gave a fairly clear picture of the burning of their neighbor's house.

One after another the pupils arose, eager to add other exciting experiences. Most of them, because of the opening stories, naturally turned to fires they had seen.

Finally the teacher said, "You surely have had some interesting experiences to relate, but I cannot listen longer now to your stories. I am going to let you tell them in another way. Will you please write them for me during the study period?"

With this request he left the room, and the pupils began their written exercise. Some time later the results were gathered. The following is Virginia's story as it was first written:

AN EXCITING FIRE

"We were eating lunch when we saw the people running down the street dragging hoses, we went to see what was the matter. At the end of the block there was two houses a fire and a third one starting. The wind was blowing and that made it worse.

"At one house they were letting furniture out of the window. The firemen shouting and scrambling for hoses the people out on the sidewalk added to the excitement.

"Finally they got it all out, but the loss was $5,000 on the houses."

This paper is typical of the results in general. They all had about the same matter-of-fact cast.

What should be done with them? How would you proceed to get better results in composition? What first step would you take in correcting such a set of papers?

This teacher, after reading the papers carefully, took the class again the next day.

"Did you see the fire you were telling me about in this paper, Henry?" was his opening question.

"Oh, yes. I was right there."

"I know; but did you see it while you were writing about it yesterday?"

The boy shook his head negatively.

"Now tell me, Henry, what were you really thinking about when you were preparing this lesson?"

"Well, I was thinking 'bout getting it ready for you."

"I thought so. And you, Virginia, did you really see that fire? Did you hear the calls, and see the fire department dashing up the street? Did you watch the smoke pouring out of the building while you were writing, I mean?"

"Not very clearly," responded the girl.

"Well, I think that none of you saw very clearly the picture you were trying to make some one else see, did you? I am sure you can do much better than you did if you will just see and feel the excitement while you write. Wouldn't you like to try again right now?"

There was an affirmative response.

"I shall not pass back these papers, but shall let each of you have a new sheet. For the next fifteen minutes, I want you to make me see that fire or other excitement you experienced."

With this stimulation, the class leaped eagerly into the exercise. Twenty minutes later, the results were passed in. Here is Virginia's second story:

A BAD BLAZE

"We were eating lunch when somebody cried, "Fire!" Everyone jumped up and dashed out of the door. At the end of the block was a house encircled in flames.

"The fire department came dashing down the road, the people were running here and there. There was confusion everywhere. The firemen quickly climbed the ladders to extinguish the rapidly gaining flames. The flames were hard to get under control because of the great heat.

"They were tumbling furniture out of the windows. The house next door had started and had gained a headway. They heard shrieks of a child who was in the upstairs. They thought it was impossible to save it but one very brave man tried and succeeded. He got the child just as the floor fell. He finally got to the porch where the rest of the firemen were.

"It was useless to try any more to save the house so they let it burn to the ground."

What is the essential difference between the two stories?

Simply one great thing—**life.** The second tale is thrilled with reality, vividness, movement which comes because the child re-lived the experience **while** she wrote it. In all composition work no practical suggestion is of more importance than this: **Think, see, feel, picture the thing while writing or speaking.** And this should be the great guiding thought both in speech and in writing.

In telling their exciting experiences, the pupils were first permitted to take all the time they wished. In re-writing the compositions they were given about fifteen minutes. The papers produced in leisurely fashion revealed an indifferent, matter-of-fact spirit; those written when the pupils were keyed up to the

effort were full of life. But more than this, and vital to our present point, **the second set of papers contained fewer errors.** For example, 68 mistakes in spelling were found in the first set, 53 in the second—this despite the fact that the second compositions contained fully thirty per cent more words than did the first. The second set of papers likewise had fewer mistakes in grammar and punctuation, fewer faults in sentence structure, while the diction was markedly more effective.

Carelessness accounts for a large percentage of the mistakes in language. Teachers usually take good care of the pupils during the recitation; but during study periods, when pupils are left largely to themselves, the good work of the class is frequently cancelled through carelessness.

If during supervised study periods half the time now given to correcting needless mistakes were devoted to preventing them, the results would be far more satisfactory, and right language habits would be formed from the beginning.

A shift of emphasis too should be made from general class criticism to giving attention to individual needs. Too much educational ammunition is wasted in taking "flock shots" at language faults that may or may not be common. Correction to be more effective, must be aimed at each pupil, with the end constantly in view to cultivate in him the desire and the ability to correct himself.

The responsibility for keeping his oral or written work free from errors should gradually be shifted to the

pupil's shoulders. A rule of language, once clearly taught and reasonably fixed by drill, belongs thereafter to him; and he should be held to its application, not by repeating and re-directing, but by a firm refusal on the part of the teacher to accept careless work.

The following plan, suggested by a successful English teacher, offers one practical way to get results. He says:

"When a pupil hands in a paper, ask him, 'Has it any mistakes in spelling?'

"'I don't know,' is the usual reply.

"'Then you may keep your paper until to-morrow and tell me.'

"This may seem harsh treatment to the pupil at first; but he soon comes to enjoy the spirit of independence it creates in him."

In a similar way the pupil may be trained to keep his composition free from errors in punctuation, paragraphing, and sentence structure, to be accurate in his choice of words, and to overcome his faults in enunciation and pronunciation. Such placing of responsibility will certainly make for intelligent self-criticism. With these more tangible mistakes cleared away by the pupil, time may be had to attend to the larger, more vital phases of composition.

QUESTIONS

1. Why does constructive criticism bring the best results?
2. Show by giving practical illustrations from letters, papers and notebooks how carelessness accounts for a large proportion of the mistakes in language.
3. What method have you found most successful to stimulate the spirit of self-correction in pupils?

4. Give some illustration other than those given to show the demand for spontaneous efficiency in speech and in writing in every day life.

5. What kinds of improved practice might the school give to develop ability in pupils to speak and to write fluently yet accurately?

6. What caused the marked improvement in the second of the compositions given in the illustrative exercises?

EXERCISES

1. Have a round table discussion of this problem: Under what conditions have the choicest poems, speeches, and scenes in stories and plays been produced? Be ready to share in the discussion by giving an instance from the life of some writer.

2. Ask some successful speaker, reporter, editor, or business correspondent for practical suggestions on how to use language effectively. Make a summary of the best points gathered by yourself and your associates.

CULTIVATING SKILL IN SPEECH

After the child has been led to talk on some subject of first-hand interest, what then? How can he best be helped to express himself effectively? What corrective guidance can the teacher give in training him to speak not only with ease but with accuracy?

Shall the pupil be corrected while he is speaking? That depends on two things—the nature of the child and the nature of the mistake. Some children take correction with little disturbance of their flow of thought; others are greatly embarrassed by it. Each pupil should be dealt with, not by any set rule, but according to the needs of his nature. Every child, however, should be trained not to be supersensitive over interruptions but to accept helpful criticism gracefully, and through it learn to be watchful of his own speech.

Many errors, such as the misuse of a grammatical form, mispronunciation, or the mischoice of a word, can be readily corrected in passing. If, for illustration, the pupil says, "We **was** going," the teacher may easily slip in the right form, "We **were** going;" or ask, "What did you say?"—and the pupil, correcting the fault, will usually continue without losing the thread of his story. But if correction of the error involves a change in sentence structure, as in the "and" habit, the interruption may result disastrously.

At one time in preparing a group of practice teachers

for their training work, it was suggested that each make an effort to overcome the prevalent use of the needless "and" by the pupils. On opening the door of the practice room the next day, the supervisor overheard the teacher making this curt correction: "There, you said it again."

A boy, as was soon discovered, was trying to tell about an experience which he and his father had had out on an Indian reservation. Despite this rebuff, the pupil attempted to go on with his story, but before the next sentence was finished, he said, "and then we"—

"Can't you use another word besides 'and'?" abruptly asked the teacher.

The lad's face flushed but he bravely proceeded to finish telling the incident when the vexatious "and" came again.

"How many times do I have to tell you not to use that word?"

As a result of this cutting reproof the boy sat down. In spite of all the teacher could do he would not say another word.

This cruelly untactful treatment was due, of course, to the immaturity of the teacher; but it shows plainly a kind of criticism which is worse than futile. Children are constantly being thrown into a state of blundering self-consciousness, and are having confidence essential to their ease of speech destroyed by some tyro of a critic alert to catch and hold up to ridicule their mistakes. **It is trying enough under the most favorable conditions to speak before an audience without being subjected to the fear of nagging criticism.** There are surely better ways to train the child to speak correctly.

The following experience of a parent with a live four-year-old son is suggestive:

"Once when I was taking my boy to Chicago," says this man, "the lad, filled with interest in the new scenes, was naturally very expressive. Listening to his enthusiastic outbursts, I suddenly discovered in his speech a great many faulty expressions. Among the most distressful of the faults was the "aint" habit.

"'Oh, aint that a big windmill!' 'Aint that a big herd of hogs!' 'Aint that a big river!'

"I determined to clear away that error forthwith. Each time the child would say 'aint', I said 'isn't', and had him repeat the right form. He took the correction with no open objection at first; but I noticed that he gradually grew less talkative under the strain. Finally he sat silent for awhile; but suddenly something interesting flashed by.

" 'Oh, aint that a' —'Isn't!' I checked him.

"The little fellow turned with protest and pleading mingled in his voice, and said, 'Papa, I'll say "isn't" when we get to Chicago.'

" 'All right, laddie,' the father responded, kissing the troubled little brow; 'just say what you like. I'll not annoy you any more over this silly mistake now; we'll get rid of it later.' "

Teachers should not grow impatient for immediate results from their corrective work. The supplanting of wrong with right habits of speech is not the work of a day nor of a week. Some mistakes may be cleared away quickly, others are provokingly tenacious. They seem

to be like the proverbial cat; they may be killed in every one of the eight grades, and still have a ninth life to go on through high school or even college.

These persistent trouble-makers should be discovered and defeated. What they are may be rather readily determined through speech surveys. Certainly among them will be discovered the "and" habit.

Overcoming the "and" habit is a language duty that should be faced squarely. This fault of speech is as common as dandelions; and about as hard to eradicate. But has any well directed, concerted effort been made to uproot it? Is the seriousness of the fault appreciated? Is the cause of it understood? It would seem not.

The "and" habit is the first step up from baby language. Infants begin by using words; as **mamma, papa.** After a while they may say, **"Mamma, come," "Papa, come,"** and finally they reach the stage where these two thoughts are brought together. **"Mamma come and papa come."** Many children, it would seem, never develop greatly beyond this habit of coördination. Certainly they do not generally seem to feel what it means to subordinate one thought to another, or we should not hear so frequently such oral work as this typical story shows:

AN UNEXPECTED BATH

"We were going to the field and we had to cross a big creek, and it was too wide to jump and too deep to wade. My sister saw a loose pole on a nearby fence and we got it and made a bridge and then we tried to walk across. She went first and got over safely but I got in the middle and lost my head, I guess, and I tumbled in, and oh, what a sight I was as I scrambled up the muddy bank. And she just sat there laughing. But it was no joke."

What is the cure for such a "run on" sentence structure? The cure is in the cause. Children must be trained not only in their writing but in their speech properly to subordinate the less important parts of the sentence. We prate a good deal about subordinate clauses. We drill children to give the names of them—**time, place, manner, degree, reason, cause, condition, concession,** and so on *ad infinitum;* but are they trained to feel what subordination really means? Is the habit of using the subordinate element rightly fixed in their daily speech? Are they taught how to slip into their sentences the graceful participial phrase, the appositive, or the subordinate clause to give finish and force to their language?

Only very rarely is such teaching to be found. Most of the time is taken up in teaching facts about speech instead of in training the pupil to speak effectively.

How shall such a composition as the one just given be corrected? The pupil should be trained to weigh his thoughts more carefully. Instead of being permitted to ramble on carelessly, the pupil should be given tactful help in building sentences that are clear and graceful.

For illustration: "We were going down to the field and we had to cross a big creek, and it was too wide to jump and too deep to wade."

Reconstruct this sentence and prevent this over-use of "and." How many sentences should be made of it? Two. Very well. What is the main thought in the first sentence? What is the less important thought? Construct the sentence so as to make the hearer see these things according to their relative importance.

By such questioning as this, pupils will soon recast the composition with results somewhat similar to the following:

AN UNEXPECTED BATH

"On our way to the field we had to cross a big creek. It was too wide to jump and too deep to wade. My sister, seeing a loose pole on a nearby fence, got it and made a bridge. Then we tried to walk across. She managed to get over safely; but when I reached the middle, I seemed to lose my head; for I tumbled in. Oh, what a sight I was as I scrambled up the muddy bank! She sat there laughing; but it was no joke to me."

Such correction is comparatively easy in written work. The difficulty, however, is in training the child not to over-use or misuse "and" in speaking. After a confidential relationship has been brought about between pupils and teacher, and a coöperative spirit towards criticism has been created, the pupils may occasionally be stopped in the midst of their story, and helped to reconstruct the faulty oral sentence with a view to eliminating the unnecessary "ands." This with drills to reinforce the correction and careful attention to sentence structure in all their writing, will help greatly to overcome the fault.

Lack of proper organization is another vital defect in common speech. Ordinary talk is usually choppy, oral stories are often rambling, and spoken explanations frequently seem to be without center or circumference. Thoughts expressed through speech are not often developed from point to point with precision.

This serious fault might largely be prevented through more careful lesson assignments. Instead of flinging before the class hurriedly, during the final moment of a

recitation, some vague general directions, teachers should take time to open up the subject, to give some suggestive guide lines, to help pupils individually to find their way through their themes.

Suppose, for illustration, the subject chosen is, "How Common Things are Made or Produced." Each pupil should be led to make a choice of some special topic under this general heading. Thus one may select "How Cheese is Made." Another may take "The Canning of Tomatoes." Still another may deal with "The Story of a Copper Coin," "How Salt is Refined," "Hay Making," or with any other similar topic that has for him first-hand interest.

Following this, each pupil should be started "thinking through his subject." A few suggestive questions to face him towards his problem should be given; as, What is the first thing to be told about hay-making? What next should be explained? What is the third step in the process? With some such lead as this, the pupil begins to make a mental survey of his composition materials, and better organization is assured.

Pupils should be trained from the first to speak without the hindering help of notes. They may be allowed, of course, to jot down points to be made, or to make an outline, but these should be laid aside in speaking. The outline at best is but a crutch; and usually, if leaned on, it tends to make the speech halting and lame. Rather should the speaker get his points in his head and hold them there while he is speaking. Ability to talk without notes, to speak directly to the audience, is one of the prime elements of success in speech.

Mental exercises in language are demanded to-day even more than drills in mental arithmetic. To cultivate skill that makes pupils spontaneously efficient in speech, we must give them frequent practice in blocking out their subjects orally, in building effective oral paragraphs, and in developing point by point familiar stories, descriptions, and explanations before classes and other real audiences. Such training persisted in through the grades and the early years of high school would not only clarify and systematize the oral work of our schools, but it would give to us a great many more convincing public speakers.

QUESTIONS

1. What advice based on your experience in conducting classes have you to give about correcting pupils while they are talking?
2. What mistakes common to childhood seem to correct themselves in time? Which seem to need correction from outside sources? Name five of each kind.
3. Give one or more practical suggestions for overcoming the "and" habit.
4. What are the most common speech faults you notice?
5. How can pupils be best helped to keep their thoughts to the point?

EXERCISES

1. Choose some interesting incident out of your own experiences that can be briefly told; or select a short story of about the length of a fable, which you have read in the papers or magazines recently. Tell the story to your associates. Let each in turn tell stories. How may one improve in skill to tell a story?
2. Develop in the form of a two minute talk some thought you feel strongly about. Try to make one point clearly. Your associates should do likewise. Then let a general discussion be held on how to improve one's speech.

TRAINING THE TONGUE

The best way to break up a bad habit is to fix a good one. In turning a stream from its wild, native channel out to the thirsty desert, the irrigationist first digs a new channel, then puts in a dam. To change the course of a child's language into proper channels, the teacher must follow a similar plan.

Not head-teaching but tongue-training is the first essential. To fill the mind with inhibitive cautions and rules of speech, is like throwing a dam across the stream: it may check the waters, but it does not permanently turn them. Neither does mere correction change the learner's expression, unless it is followed by persistent drill to make sure that the proper form will leap unfailingly to the pupil's lips whenever he tries to express himself.

This tongue-training should be given frequently as a part of the language lesson, and as long as the needs of the class call for it. It should be given also to each pupil when his individual faults in speech make special attention necessary. All of this work, indeed, to be effective, must reach the individual in such a way as to carry over into his daily speech and stimulate in him such corrective self-effort as makes him strive constantly to cultivate proper speech habits.

A certain successful lecturer was once asked how he had acquired his remarkable accuracy of speech.

"By private practice," he replied. "My teachers taught me rules; I made it my pride to apply them. Whenever my attention was called to an error in my language, I began at once to get rid of it.

"At one time, for example, I was corrected by a teacher for using **like** wrongly in such a sentence as, 'I did it **like** he did.' Thereafter, whenever I caught myself making the mistake, I would give my ear and my tongue a training by repeating again and again the right form: 'I did it as he did, I did it as he did, I did it as he did' until the mistake was conquered. Thus one by one I overcame my language faults by drilling on correct usage till I made the right form a matter of habit."

The sooner such practice can be given the better. **Tongue-training exercises belong primarily to the elementary school age.** This is the natural drill period, because the child's language is then still plastic; and what errors he may have picked up are less firmly set than later.

Correct usage should be regarded largely as "the multiplication table of language." If as much energy and zeal were given to mastering the forms that trouble the tongue as is now generally devoted to learning this arithmetical table, most pupils would conquer ninety per cent of the type errors of speech before they left the sixth grade.

But just how can this desirable result be achieved?

First find the mistakes. Next create popular sentiment in favor of correct speech; and finally drill, drill, drill on right forms until proper use is made second nature with the pupils.

A good beginning in this work of displacing wrong habits with right ones is to be found in a survey of the English of the community. Such a survey was recently taken in a city of 10,000 inhabitants by following this plan: For two weeks each teacher observed carefully and quietly the speech she heard, jotting down the errors made in violation of the rules of grammar and marking the number of times each mistake was made. At the end of the given period, the mistakes were handed in, and each principal tabulated the results for his school; these in turn were summarized by the superintendent. The final report revealed this interesting fact:

More than fifty per cent of the errors overheard were made on twenty type forms, listed in order of the relative frequency of their occurrence as follows:

Have got; seen for **saw; can** for **may; "aint"** for **isn't; ate** and **"et"** for **eaten; John he** and similar redundancies; **don't** for **doesn't; done** for **did; them** for **those; it's me, him, her; can't get none** and other double negatives; **set, lay,** and **raise** for **sit, lie** and **rise; was** for **were; that there, this here; hadn't ought; who** for **whom; good** for **well; will** for **shall; in** for **into; Mary** and **me, her, him** (used as subject).

Other "trouble-makers" less frequently heard were:

Took for **taken; bit** for **bitten; write** for **written; forgot** for **forgotten; "knowed"** for **known; "throwed"** for **thrown; showed** for **shown; "drawed"** for **drawn; rung, sung, begun, run** for **rang, sang, began,** and **ran; come** for **came; went** for **gone; what** for **that; like** for **as** and **as if; kind of a** for **kind of; "his'n," "our'n," "your'n," "their'n,"** and a few other miscellaneous mistakes.

No pretense is made that this was a scientifically accurate investigation. It is presented here only as one

practical way by which any school may discover common mistakes in the speech of its pupils or in that of the community—an essential first step in beginning any campaign of correction.

Such a survey has a double value. It sets the boundary lines of the field for work; and it arouses a community spirit that makes for better speech. Only through coöperative effort intelligently directed can the common faults in language be overcome. Corrective work in the past has largely failed because of lack of proper team work, and because it has not been based on the results of first hand investigation of language needs of the community.

Nor should these surveys be limited to grammar. They may well be extended to cover other more or less tangible phases of speech; as, sentence structure, diction, pronunciation and enunciation. Sentence structure and diction are given due consideration in chapters vi and vii; but pronunciation and enunciation rightly deserve emphatic attention here in connection with tongue training.

Careless articulation of words is a national fault in America. The hurry habits of this nervous, electric-minded age account largely for the fault; but whatever the cause a cure is demanded.

The importance of this point was emphasized recently in a letter from one of our army officers. Replying to the question, "Why do so many of our boys who take training for positions in the United States Army fail?" Lieutenant Blaynley, an instructor in one of the reserve training camps, summed up the reasons in one word, "slouchiness." This "slouchiness" was manifested not only in dress and bearing but in habits of thought and

study, and particularly in speech. Directing attention to this last named fault, the Lieutenant says:

"A great number of men have failed because of **inability to articulate clearly.** A man who cannot impart his ideas to his command in clear, distinct language, and with sufficient volume of voice to be heard reasonably far is not qualified to give commands upon which human lives depend. Many men disqualified by this handicap might have become officers under their country's flag had they been properly trained in school and college. It is to be hoped therefore that more emphasis will be placed upon the basic principles of elocution in the training of our youth. Even without prescribed training in elocution a great improvement could be wrought by the instructors in our schools and colleges, regardless of the subject, insisting that all answers be given in a loud, clear, well rounded voice, which, of course, necessitates the opening of the mouth and free movement of the lips. It is remarkable how many excellent men suffer from this handicap, and how difficult and almost impossible it is to correct this after the formative years of life."

Nothing is more disastrous to the sense of speech than inarticulate utterance. Because of faulty enunciation, a good deal of the meaning of public addresses and private conversation must be guessed at or lost. The rapid-fire talk of too many people becomes a mere jumble of sounds. Shakespeare voiced his impatience with slovenly speech, and gave a sound bit of advice when he had Hamlet say to the players:

"Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounced it to

you, trippingly on the tongue; but if you mouth it, as many of our players do, I had as lief the town crier spoke my lines."

This pertinent suggestion should be made a motto for every class in every schoolroom. In all of their recitations, pupils should be trained to "speak the speech trippingly;" that is, to enunciate their sounds distinctly, and to pronounce the words properly when reciting. Moreover, they should not be permitted to mouth their answers but should be trained to speak in clear, carrying tones. A little firmness and persistence on the part of every teacher, reinforced by a good example, would go far towards correcting the common "slouchiness" in speech.

The faults that call for special corrective attention should be determined by a survey of the common errors in enunciation and pronunciation. It is more than likely that among them will be found the following trouble-makers: **jist, kin, git, fer, wuz, bekuz, uv, und, ur, frum.** These and other commonly used little words make most of the difficulty. Because of the frequency of their occurrence in sentences they give a slovenly cast to speech unless they are properly pronounced. It is, therefore, of first importance that children be trained to pronounce properly **just, can, get, for, was, because, of, and, or, from,** and other like mischief-makers.

Tongue laziness in this and other matters of articulation should be overcome. The too common tendency to follow the lines of least resistance accounts for most of the inaccuracy in our spoken language. Because of

this slackness, difficult sounds are slighted or dodged and words are often left unfinished. As a result we hear **'em,** for **them, thinkin',** for **thinking, haf to** for **have to, mebbe** for **may be, sperical** for **spherical, catarr** for **guitar, 'rithmetic, histry, jography, swep, wep, kep, slep,** and a great many other carelessly enunciated words. They are permitted to fasten themselves on the speech because of lack of attention to them on the part of the teachers.

Another distressful habit is the vocalizing of pauses in speech with inarticulate sounds. The result is **well-u, why-u, und, ur, u.** Greater freedom of expression is the best general cure for these "halting habits." Positive practice in composing sentences freely to express familiar thoughts, will be helpful in cultivating fluency. Preparation that makes the child sure of what he wishes to say will also tend to make the pupil speak smoothly. Such training should begin early and continue until ease and grace of speech is acquired.

Oral practice should be given to every child every day if practically possible. Nothing that comes from his school work can bring richer daily returns in his life than the training that cultivates in him the habits of standing properly, speaking clearly, and articulating his words with ease and accuracy. Such habits are an unfailing passport in the world of business and culture.

QUESTIONS

1. What is the fundamental principle to be followed in overcoming faults in speech and in fixing right habits?

2. In what grades should the fixing of right habits of speech be given most attention? Why?

3. How can the time of pupil and teacher best be economized in dealing with mistakes in speech?

4. What are the most valuable things to come from speech surveys? Suggest a practical way of making these surveys in every school. How may pupils and patrons be interested in the movement?

5. What do you understand to be a "type error"? Illustrate five type mistakes made in violation of the rules of grammar.

EXERCISES

1. For one week listen carefully to the language of a group of pupils. Jot down the errors they make in violation of rules of grammar. Mark the number of times each mistake occurs. Join with the members of your class, who will make like investigations, and compare results. What are the ten chief trouble-makers?

2. Make a similar survey of the enunciation habits with a view to discovering what sounds are giving most trouble? What bad habits of speech need to be overcome? How will you proceed to work against them?

3. Make similar lists of errors you hear made by clerks, telephone operators, ministers, lawyers, doctors, club women, and others in public work. Compare this list with the list of school errors. Find what value the best business and professional workers attach to correct speech.

CORRECTING WRITTEN WORK

Ability to write fluently and accurately comes only through persistent, well guided practice. How to provide enough of such practice in our schools, without overloading the teacher with papers to correct, is a baffling problem. The conscientious teacher, attempting to give critical attention to all of the written work that piles up in the daily exercises, makes a slave of herself. The careless one, slighting this duty, makes slovens of her pupils.

What is the sensible thing to do? How much written work should be laid upon the child? By what methods can this correcting of compositions be most quickly yet effectively done? These are the practical problems to be faced in this discussion. Their solution calls, first of all, for a reduction of the written work ordinarily required by the teacher. In the first and second grades, because of the mechanical difficulties, there should be little if any. In the third, fourth, fifth and sixth grades, where the beginning of written expression should be rightly made, no more compositions should be called for than can be carefully corrected by the teacher. In the grammar grades and high school, it would be much better for both pupil and teacher if the written work usually required were reduced one half.

This would be done if all of the purposeless composition exercises now assigned were eliminated. **There**

is too much aimless pen activity in our schools. To keep school children out of mischief, many teachers set their pupils copying lessons, filling notebooks, writing pointless compositions, and reproducing long stories.

As a result of this lazy kind of "busy work," a smothering load of written work is piled up for the teacher to correct. She cannot possibly do it. The work is neglected and the pupils acquire habits of carelessness they are likely never to outgrow. Besides this they often learn to hate written work in all of its forms.

Such an abuse of one of our most important means of expression is inexcusable. There is little value in writing simply to kill time. Written preparation is justified only when it is done under the impulse of a real motive, when it leads to some worth while end for the child. It should not be imposed on the pupil unless it helps to clarify thought or to develop efficiency of expression.

Another line of least resistance is followed by too many teachers when they turn their composition drudgery over to others. Sometimes the papers are shuffled and handed back to the class to correct. In high schools and colleges, assistants are often employed to do this menial task. This is an easy way to dodge the difficulty, but far from a satisfactory one.

Pupil help may of course be used in marking mistakes made in drill exercises. Applied to spelling, punctuation, and dictation work generally, it can be turned to good account; but when it comes to trusting the criticism of compositions entirely to these amateur proxies, grave

objections arise. The value of such help to the teacher is most likely to be more than cancelled by the ill effect upon the pupil. It tends to develop in him the spirit of petty fault finding; since, for the most part, his corrective work amounts merely to the picking out of a few mechanical mistakes.

More serious still, the teacher and pupil by this process are thrown out of close personal touch. The pupil, keen to feel this lack of individual attention, slackens in his own interest and care. The teacher without first-hand knowledge of the pupil's language needs, fails to make the class work most helpful. His criticisms do not strike home. They can scarcely be constructively helpful.

How shall time be found to give personal attention to the pupil's written work without overtaxing the teacher?

The following practical suggestions are offered as a partial solution of the problem:

1. Reduce the classes to a number consistent with the demand for efficient teaching.

2. Cut down the written work, as already suggested, by eliminating all aimless writing.

3. Correlate much more closely oral and written expression.

4. Lessen class criticism; increase individual supervision.

5. Occasionally test the papers by having the pupils read them before the class.

6. In correcting compositions, give emphatic attention to one type fault at a time.

Regarding the first suggestion, only this need be said

here. As long as school boards and patrons impose thirty, forty, fifty, sixty or even more pupils on one teacher, they need not expect the most efficient help to be given to each child. Teaching under such conditions becomes little else than herding or entertaining boys and girls. Common sense should correct this difficulty some time. It is false economy both educationally and financially.

Enough has already been said against imposing aimless composition work on defenseless children merely to keep them busy. Reason also should rule here.

The close correlation between oral and written language has also been pointed out; but the application should be made clearer. **Skill to speak carries some degree of power to write. Ability to write effectively likewise makes for effectiveness in speech.** It is only in their outward forms that these two modes of expression are essentially different. Even in the outward forms there is a reciprocal relationship. Distinct enunciation, for example, is essential in learning to spell correctly; while proper voicing of the sentence helps greatly in the punctuating of it.

Many of the common errors in writing might be obviated if pupils were given more opportunity to thresh out their thoughts orally beforehand. Discussion flails the chaff from our ideas. It stimulates thinking and goes far towards shaping sentences in which the thought may best be cast. Talking over the subject in class or in conversation among themselves gives excellent help to young writers.

Pupils should be taught to listen mentally to their

sentences while penning them. "How does it sound?" is a good guide line in constructing both oral and written composition. Reading the paper aloud is also a valuable help in clearing away its crudities. Pupils should be trained to put their work to this test before passing it on to the teacher for final correction.

Testing the written work by ear, by having compositions read occasionally before the class, is another time-saving method. It is surprising how many faults can thus be detected. Lack of proper spirit, clumsy sentence structure, faulty diction, may be quite as readily heard as seen; mistakes even in punctuation and spelling may ofttimes be caught by ear. Besides this, when a pupil knows that his work is to be given an open test by a real audience, he is very likely to put forth his best effort to keep his composition free from blunders.

Yet despite all of these preventive measures, there will still be faults to overcome. The teacher, to guide rightly each pupil and to direct intelligently the work of the class, must frequently examine sets of papers and notebooks. How can this work be done without undue loss of time, and with best returns to the pupil?

Deal with one type fault at a time, is a good general rule to follow in correcting papers. Teachers, too often rightly anxious to clear the paper of all of its errors without delay, get lost in a maze of mistakes and fail to make any one point in their criticism stand out with impressive clearness. Other errors need not be lost sight of nor go unchecked, but if one mistake at a time receives emphatic attention, the progress in overcoming language errors will be more definite and rapid.

There are not many of these fundamental faults in composition. The following seem to be the principal sources of trouble:

SENTENCE STRUCTURE FAULTS

1. Failure to make complete sentences.
2. Misplacing of modifiers.
3. Misty use of personal pronouns.
4. Lack of proper subordination, especially illustrated by the "and" habit.
5. Use of too many words.

WORD FORMS

6. Inaccuracy in the choice of words.
7. Incorrect use of grammatical forms.

MECHANICS

8. Carelessness in penmanship, punctuation, and spelling.

ORGANIZATION

9. Lack of close-knit paragraphs.
10. Rambling structure.

These type faults, except in spelling and punctuation, apply alike to oral and written work.

ILLUSTRATIVE LESSONS

The method of dealing with one fundamental fault at a time is illustrated in the treatment of the following lessons taken directly from schoolroom practice:

The pupils of a certain fourth grade were recently led to talk, then to write, of their winter fun. The teacher, examining the results, discovered that the

children seemed most to need help in making sentences. Their compositions usually consisted of one or two long sentences filled with "ands." Nearly every child gave evidence that sentence sense needed cultivating.

This main need discovered, the correction was focused on it. As each composition was read, some illustration of the fault was copied from it on a sheet of paper. If the composition happened to contain some well built sentences, these were copied as worthy examples.

The following is a part of the sentence collection that was gathered by the teacher for use in reinforcing the lesson the next day:

FAULTY SENTENCES

1. Each side gets a bunch of snowballs and then one side says fire and they all began to throw.

2. Once me and another boy made a snow fort and we got a bunch of boys on one side and a bunch of boys on the other and we made a bunch of snowballs. Then we put a flag on each of our forts then we started to throw at each other we knocked down one of the flags and ran and got it.

3. I like to watch my brother shovel off the snow, he makes a slide and pulls me a block or two and dumps me off and soaks my face with snow, and then pulls me home again.

4. We went in a big sled and as we were going up the hill we did not know it was so steep and we went a flying off tumbling down heels over head one right after another, and when we got up we thought it would be lots of fun to build a snowman and when we built it we all sat on top of him and we went down on the ground.

WELL CONSTRUCTED SENTENCES

Once we built a snow fort. That was lots of fun for us but it took a long while to build it. We had an American flag. One boy got his eye soaked. He could not battle any more. All were

watching closely. The battle lasted for about twenty-five minutes. Was that not a fight?

In an eighth grade class, the oral discussion had centered on thrift stamps.

After talking about the various ways by which boys and girls might make and save money, the pupils were given opportunity to write on the subject.

SENTENCE STRUCTURE

A **jumbling of their sentence structure** was the principal fault discovered in their papers. Most of the pupils showed a need for training in saying one thing at a time and in saying it clearly. In correcting the papers, a score of sentences illustrating both wrong and right structure were selected. The following are a few of the faulty sentences:

1. One way in which I can save is to do without luxuries such as gum, candy, popcorn and many other articles such as saving paper, food and clothes.
2. Boys could save by carrying papers and shoveling off sidewalks for people could save by putting a nickel away every time they wanted something like candy going to shows.
3. Another way is instead of going to picture shows or buying candy or gum that we could buy a twenty-five cents thrift stamp with that money goes to the government to clothe the soldiers.

These illustrate better sentence structure:

1. You can also save by not putting both butter and jam on your bread.
2. In writing a letter or a composition do not use three sheets of paper when you can get along with one.
3. Instead of going to the show so much, put your money away and try to make the evening enjoyable at home.
4. A good way to save for the government is to shine your

own shoes and put the cost of the shine in your pocket, to be added to until you can buy a thrift stamp.

The following also illustrates a fine "sentence sense" throughout:

"I am accustomed to going to a show every Saturday night. I usually ride on the car both ways, costing me ten cents. It costs eleven cents to get into the show. When I come out of the show I have nine cents. I spend the odd four cents then ride home on the street car. When I have gotten off the car I have spent twenty-five cents. I am not going to the show every week, but I am going to take the money saved and buy one thrift stamp every week."

With such a collection in hand, taken directly from the work of the pupils, the teacher can easily make a practical, straight-to-the-mark lesson. The sentences clipped apart, may be passed to the pupils to be re-copied quickly on the board; and there, spread before the class, is the material for a vitalized, socialized lesson in sentence building. The faults in the sentences should be cleared away by the pupils. The essential principles involved in the making of clear sentences should be discussed.

Similar lessons based on the pupils' own work may readily be made in punctuation, spelling, paragraph building, diction, and various other fundamental phases of composition work.

Spelling. For further example, in the fourth grade papers just described, the following words were found misspelled:

steal	build	pieces	glad	brother
sliding	stayed	skating	enjoy	fought
coasting	break	cold	ever	children
stumbled	rough	sled	started	fine

The class was then asked to learn how to spell these words correctly and how to use them properly. A dictation lesson was used to follow up the assignment.

It is well, especially in the lower grades, to keep in a notebook the words misspelled by the class. Occasionally the spelling lesson may be given from such a book. Spelling should be more closely correlated with written composition work and vocabulary building than is commonly done in our schools. It is only as the child writes that he needs to spell. The day will probably come when all of the spelling will be connected with written expression. Meanwhile some good beginnings may be made, as just illustrated, by making vitalized spelling lessons from troublesome lists of words found in pupils' notebooks and papers.

Grammar. In another set of compositions taken from the sixth grade the following mistakes made in violation of the rules of grammar were found:

There was as many rocks.
Me and my uncle was going.
He fell in the water.
Me and a couple of boys.
I couldn't swim good.
My friend jumped in the water.
The brook connects to the river.
We set down.
A horse that was broke.
He laid still.
We come to a river.
I seen a garden snake.
A few girls and myself.
We set down for a while.
We throwed stones at it.
I ran in the house.

These were made the basis of a lesson in correct usage. The sentences were corrected, the violated rules reviewed, and drills to fix right habits in speech were given.

Choice of Words. Following are some sentences

taken from this same set of sixth grade compositions showing a mischoice of words:

He fixed my lines.
I heard the fish line shake.
I caught a large sum of pollywogs.
We went to a lovely pond.
He pumped me out on the bicycle.
We caught a lot of fish.
We began to get busy.
Believe me, it tasted good.
We found a couple of rocks and pegged at the snake.

A vocabulary building lesson, wherein the pupils were given a chance to discuss the proper meaning of the words misused and to find the fitting words, was given in connection with this exercise.

PUNCTUATION

Vitalized lessons in punctuation may likewise be developed from the pupils' own papers. The following sentences, for example, were selected from fifth grade compositions. They gave a good basis for a live lesson in the proper use of quotation marks.

We pulled the reins and called out whoa but he wouldn't stop.

He said, "I thought I told you to keep off him," I said he didn't buck.

Then I said Believe me I'll never go into the pasture where the big steer is with my red sweater on.

And the baby woke up and my aunt said that if I would take care of her she would give me a quarter.

I asked them what they were doing.

"Shooting birds," was the reply.

"You must not shoot birds," I said.

This last illustration, by the way, is the only example the author found in about one hundred fifth grade papers wherein the pupil had used quotation marks both correctly and intelligently.

The following sentences were used as a basis for a vitalized lesson in the proper use of the period. They were taken from the same set of fifth grade papers.

While I was there. The little boy got sick, I called the nabor lady and she help me until his mother came home.

I was six years old when I got up town I forgot what I was sent after and had to go back and she wrote it on a piece of paper.

The way I earned my first money was catching muskrats I got 10c apiece I cot five and three possoms. and I got an air rifle.

I earned my first money by going after the milk for a lady across the street from us she gave me about 50 cents a week I went about three blocks after the milk.

With close to life examples such as these to reinforce the rules, the lessons are far more likely to be applied than when the teaching is merely formal. Only through the help of such vitalized exercises, indeed, can skill to use the pen be developed.

QUESTIONS

1. What is the chief problem to be faced by the teacher in providing proper practice in written composition?
2. What bad results come from crowding too much written composition on children in the lower grades? Where and how should this work be begun?
3. How may the composition drudgery be reduced in the upper grades without reducing the amount of real practice?
4. What is the best help that oral composition has to offer to the written work?
5. Suggest one way of substituting other seat work for copying or writing lessons.
6. What five types of "follow up" lessons may be prepared while correcting a set of papers?

EXERCISES

1. Have a round table discussion of the ten type faults given

on page 134. Which of these have given you most difficulty personally? In class?

2. Take a set of papers gathered from any class from the fourth grade up; deal with them according to the plan suggested. Prepare from the papers, exercises in (1) Sentence Building; (2) Grammar; (3) Spelling; (4) Punctuation; (5) Vocabulary work.

3. Make a collection of twenty errors in language found on public sign boards, in advertisements, or in newspaper stories. Have a group of pupils collect ten errors from the same sources and work with you in correcting the errors. Do the pupils show more or less interest in this work than in perfunctory exercises? Do they learn more by such effort than when following set lessons?

V

MEASURING RESULTS IN COMPOSITION

Progress is predicated on the proper measuring of results. How to evaluate quickly yet surely the returns in oral and written composition is our present problem.

FACING THE ISSUE

How to measure the language ability of pupils quickly yet surely, is a puzzling problem. Speech must be judged, of course, while it is being spoken. Written work too must be dealt with expeditiously, as teachers cannot give much time to appraising compositions. Yet this work of measuring efficiency in both speech and writing must be well done if substantial progress is to be made. By what practicable plan can it be done with speed and accuracy?

A good deal of time and scholarly effort has been given to the solution of the problem. Certain educators, realizing the crying need of teachers for definite help and guidance in testing language work, have devised various measuring scales. The effort has brought forth much good fruit; but the scales thus far evolved have not proved entirely satisfactory in practice. Even those who have been most active in this work are not ready to pronounce the results perfect. One of the men who had much to do with developing one of the most noted of these scales recently said, "We made a painstaking effort to solve the problem, and we produced a scale that looks promising on paper; but I must confess that it has proved rather disappointing in practical use even in my own school system."

Two main reasons account for any failure on the part of composition scales to measure up to all that may

have been hoped from them. In the first place, they are only in the experimental stage. Their best friends are frank to say that they need further proving and improving. In the second place, the scale is too often misunderstood and misused by teachers, being frequently put to purposes for which it was never intended. Speaking to this point, Doctor Courtis recently said: "A carpenter who attempts to drive nails with a saw or to cut boards with a hammer is not likely to be impressed with the value of either of these tools." The scale is not intended as a means of giving daily marks. It has value "in determining the efficiency of different methods of teaching."

This central purpose of the measuring scale is clearly suggested by Doctor Hillegas, one of the pioneers in their making, in this statement: "Proper standards would make it possible to compare with certainty the work done in one school or system of schools with that done elsewhere. They would make it impossible for mere opinion to control so much of our schoolroom practice."

Doctor Trabue also recently made this helpful explanation: "*The scale is not a teaching instrument; it is a measuring instrument.* It is not to be used every day nor every week; but rather should it be used only once or twice a year, or as special occasion may require to check up results."

The scale bears about the same relation to the writing of compositions as a bushel basket bears to the raising of corn or potatoes. Some stimulus may come, it is true, from a composition scale to both teacher and pupil to do better work, that could hardly come to the

farmer from a bushel basket; but essentially the devices are alike in their central purpose to measure results.

If this conception of the scale is kept clearly in mind much of the controversy now arising from a misapplication of this measuring device would be cleared away. Any remaining difficulty can be removed only by perfecting the scales themselves. That they are by no means perfect, is clearly indicated in this remark from Doctor Courtis, made of one of the scales now being most widely used: "It is," said he, "a crude instrument at best." Yet his advice and the advice of other leaders is for teachers to use the scale until something better is developed. This would seem the fair and sensible thing to do.

The language teacher should be familiar with such excellent contributions to the field of measurement in language and composition, as the Hillegas Scale, the Trabue Completion Tests in Language, the Harvard-Newton Scale, the Nassau County (N. Y.) Scale, the Willing Scale, and all other worthy attempts to formulate scientific standards of objective measurement.

That the perfect scale has not yet been devised is nothing to the discredit of the pioneers in the movement. They have at least blazed a good trail. Columbus did not reach India, the goal of his dreams, but he did open the way to America. Those who have led in the standardization movement have likewise opened a new world in education. Our work is to follow their leading with further exploration and conquest.

The perfecting of a scheme for measuring language

work is a challenge to our powers. We face in this work a thicket of troubles. Any composition, oral or written, is a complicated form of expression. In its construction, grammatical forms, sentence structure, diction, punctuation, spelling, enunciation, and other speech elements all play their various parts. Any one of these phases of the work, taken by itself, gives trouble enough to test. What then may be said of the difficulties one faces in measuring the composition as a whole?

No composition is exactly like any other. If it is a true expression of thought and feeling—and it must be such to be really worth while—it will reflect a spirit and style of its own. The vitality of any composition lies largely in its individuality. How can these individual qualities that give life to language expression be evaluated by any general set standards?

If such standards are evolved, can they be applied with success to both oral and written work? Thus far the attempt to make measuring scales has been directed mainly towards the grading of written compositions. There is even a greater need for some help in measuring oral work.

These various difficulties connected with our problem seem to make it so baffling as to make a satisfactory solution of it impossible. But to face difficulties squarely is the first step towards overcoming them. Some natural trail may yet be found through this thicket of troubles, which can finally be made into a plain path for teachers to follow in promoting the language progress of their pupils. If measuring scales are to become a main traveled road to success in composition, they must certainly be made plain and direct.

The scale, like a road, is but a means to an end. If the means is too difficult to follow, the end is not reached. This seems to be the principal fault with the scales already developed for measuring the composition as a whole. The chief complaint lodged against measuring scales by teachers and others who have tried faithfully to follow these devices is that they are too complicated.

This complexity arises from three main causes: 1. Closeness of the steps of the scale; 2. Indefiniteness in the qualities that give each specimen its place therein; 3. Variety of subjects represented in the various compositions. Attempts have been made towards overcoming these difficulties, but as yet no scale has been evolved that is at once simply graded, well-focused, and made up of a standard type of compositions such as might be readily produced in grade or high school classes working under normal conditions. Until some such device is developed, the composition measuring scale will not be entirely satisfactory.

The first step necessary to simplify the scale is a reduction of the number of gradations. Why should not this step be taken? What practical purpose is served by a scale of ten or even six steps that could not be as well or better served by one of five at most?

The second step towards simplifying the scale should be to focus the instrument more clearly. A certain haziness akin to that which marks a photograph taken by an unfocused camera, marks the scales already evolved. The composite judgment which determined the choice

of the specimens that make the scales lacked, it would seem, a clear common aim. A better general understanding among the scale-makers as to the essential qualities of a good composition and the relative values thereof would do much to give sharper definition to the result.

Regarding the third point: The multiplicity of subjects represented in some of the scales is most disconcerting to those who attempt to apply the instrument. It is so unlike the ordinary classroom product as to baffle most teachers. Why should not the scale be made up of compositions on one general subject of common interest? Why should there be such a jumbling together of the work of different grades?

The scales dealing with specific phases of composition work have proved more successful than those dealing with the composition as a whole. It was far easier to make a well-focused scale in such things as spelling, penmanship, punctuation, and other more or less tangible phases of language. It was easier, too, to use such a scale in the schoolroom. For that reason, these mechanical phases of language are now receiving a lion's share of the attention throughout the country to the neglect of the more vital elements.

This is far from the result desired by the promoters of the standardization movement. With them the scale was to be not an end in itself but a means to an end. By this means they hoped to free our schools from the formalism that has enslaved them. Their desire was to eliminate these non-essentials and to put scientific sanity into our examinations. Despite the misuse of the measuring devices, great service has been already performed

through this new movement to place education on a sound basis. We still need, however, to be guarded against the formalism which is threatening to steal into our schools again under a new guise.

The essential thing is to keep our values right. The mechanics of composition must be held in their proper relationship to the larger object of the thought. A true test of ability to spell is not merely learning spelling lists. Many a pupil has passed such tests with flattering marks, and yet proved constantly by his notebooks and compositions that he had really never learned to spell. The only worth while test for spelling is: Does the pupil spell correctly when he is expressing his own thoughts? The same test applies to punctuation, to penmanship, and to all other special phases of language work. We must, therefore, develop some practicable plan of testing these things in connection with the composition as a whole.

This is not to discourage drill tests in any special line of work. It is simply to insist that accuracy in spelling, punctuation, penmanship, and other special language elements be proved also in their right relationship to the complete composition.

What is needed is some measuring scale that puts these different elements in proper order. Some scheme must be devised to place the emphasis where it belongs, on the life-side of language; yet not to the neglect of the form-side. The two phases are not separable. The form and the spirit of our language expression are as body and soul. But certainly the soul of the composition, oral or written, is of first importance.

QUESTIONS

1. What is the main practical purpose to be served by a measuring scale in penmanship, spelling, arithmetic, reading, or composition?

2. Point out some of the problems to be faced in making a scale to measure oral and written composition.

3. Why have the composition measuring scales thus far devised not proved satisfactory as working scales for the ordinary teacher?

4. What must be guarded against in using specialized scales that deal with the more mechanical phases of language work, as penmanship, spelling, and punctuation?

5. Show why the giving of undue attention to the formal phases of any subject is not only pedagogically wrong, but not in harmony with the purposes of the standardization movement.

EXERCISES

1. Discuss the hit-and-miss methods commonly followed in measuring the oral and written work of pupils.

2. How might a good working scale give guidance to the teacher and promote progress?

3. Describe one of the most noted of the composition scales so far produced. Measure a group of pupils' compositions by it.

4. Report the results. Get reports of use of these scales in actual practice. See "The Value of Measurements," a discussion of Composition Measuring Scales, in the English Journal, April, 1919.

The chief trouble lies here: Criticism has been directed almost wholly towards perfecting the form side of language without due attention to its spirit. A misspelled word or a misplaced comma has often been the cause of great excitement in the classroom; while lack of life or clearness, or faulty organization, might be passed over without comment. This is "straining at a gnat and swallowing a camel."

In these days of standardization, the danger also is great that this emphasis will continue to be misplaced on such measurable phases of composition as spelling, punctuation, grammar, and penmanship to the neglect of the life-giving elements.

These mechanics of speech and writing ought rather to be given secondary consideration. The reader is warned to leap to no wrong conclusions on this point. This is not to urge that less care be given to the form side of language. Correct forms are essential in all our speech and writing. Good corn cannot be grown without good husks; but corn is not grown for the husks. The market value of the produce is measured mainly in terms of corn. Likewise in composition it is not the outward form, but the inward spirit, the life element, that counts most.

Has the speaker or writer a message? Does it ring true? Is it clearly, convincingly given? These are the

principal tests to apply to oral and written composition. If it fails to measure up to these first standards, of what use are the pretty penmanship, the correct spelling, the artistic enunciation?

"Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels and have not charity," says the Apostle Paul, "I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal." To paraphrase very freely these famous lines: **Though the speaker or writer use the most perfect forms of speech and be barren of thought or lacking in sincerity, his words must fall spiritless.** On the other hand, to quote a bit of Mr. Dooley's Irish philosophy pertinent to the point: "When a man has something to say, and don't know how to say it, he generally says it pretty well."

The effect of our failure to appreciate the life-giving elements in our language work is strikingly shown in the announcement of an editor in one of our leading magazines:

"Last summer we offered a chance to the thousands of college students in this country to submit short stories for possible publication. We offered $150 for every story deemed worthy of publication, and additional bonuses of $100, $75 and $50 for the three best stories accepted.

"It is with regret that we have to state that among the 800 stories submitted we could not find one of sufficient interest to warrant publication. The stories were read by three people, and the final decision of not one acceptable story was reached after weeks of careful deliberation.

"These college students wrote well enough. Some of them had an unusually good style; but probably on

account of their youth and inexperience, they did not seem to know life. **When they tried to write about things of which they had no personal experience, the result was insincere.**

"To sum up, they knew how to write, but they had nothing to write about. This was a fundamental defect in ninety-nine out of one hundred of the stories submitted."

Admitting all that may be said on the other side, as to the fallibility of judges, and the artificiality of prize-giving as a stimulus to expression, this is still a serious indictment of our schools against their teaching of English.

In the analysis of the causes of failure, two things worth our attention stand out: 1. It is futile to try to express thoughts we do not think and feelings we do not feel; 2. To pass the efficiency tests of real life, our speech and writing must reveal something more than an empty style. Unless something worth while is said and said well, the world has no time to listen.

To train boys and girls to express themselves effectively, the schools must do something besides sham work. Formal exercises in language must be subordinated to the expression of living thought and feeling springing out of real experiences with life and prompted by a service motive.

The teacher's first duty in helping children to cultivate skill in the use of language is to help them to discover their own thoughts and experiences worth telling, and to provide life-like opportunities to tell them. Corrective suggestions and drills on the mechanics of speech should

be based on this expression, as it reveals need for such correction and drill.

There should be no encouragement in our schools for counterfeit compositions, oral or written. The tragedy of our language work lies right here. Most of the compositions required from pupils are scarcely worth measuring. They do not reflect child thought and feeling at all. They are reproductive, imitative of grown-up ideas and style. They are artificially false to the inner spirit of true expression. They sound forced and unnatural.

The effort should be to get genuine expression. Expression of this kind springs from within, not from without. It comes only when the pupil speaks or writes under the impulse of a real-life purpose, when, as said before, he feels **impelled,** not **compelled,** to express himself.

To the credit of the scales so far produced it must be said that they have done a great deal to stimulate a wider and closer study of the language results in our schools. This, perhaps, is the best return that has come from the attempts thus far made to measure compositions.

There is still need for more careful observation of the living expression, oral and written, of children. Teachers should learn to discriminate between false and true results in composition work. To train the pupil to speak and to write effectively, they must encourage only genuine self-expression.

QUESTIONS

1. What is the chief point to be kept in mind in measuring compositions, oral or written?

2. What is the test that is being constantly applied in real life in judging the merits of speech and writing? Prove your point.

3. Wherein lies the chief cause of the failure of our schools to prepare pupils to produce compositions that measure up to the demands of life? Give illustrations.

4. On what kind of compositions must measuring scales be based if they are to be worth while in promoting progress in expression?

EXERCISES

1. Choose two compositions from the grades, the high school, or the college—one of the formal or counterfeit type, the other showing genuine self-expression. With your associates, who will make like selections, prepare a statement of the marks or evidences of sincerity in the compositions.

2. Write a brief paper—a paragraph or a lyric—expressing some thought or sentiment, or sketching some scene. Make the brief expression above all else genuine. Read the composition to your associates in class, who in turn will read theirs. Discuss the results with a view to helping one another.

3. How can teachers by working for genuine expression, serve their country through the utterances of the press and the public forum? What are some of the evidences of insincerity you have noticed in current papers, magazines, speeches and books?

THE TARGET TEST

A working plan for promoting success in composition work is badly needed. If the scale "is not a teaching but a measuring instrument," then some good "teaching instrument" should be provided to help teachers get compositions worth measuring.

By what method can the teacher best test her daily work? How can the pupil's oral and written expression be rated quickly and surely at its true value? How can the real needs of the learner be discovered? By what device can the various qualities of the composition be properly appraised? What is the central test by which efficiency in speech and in writing can be measured?

This chief objective is to be found in the life-purposes of language. Men speak and write, as already said, to stir others to think, to feel, to act with them. If they accomplish this result, they have used speech effectively. To the extent that they fail to reach and to hold the attention of others, or to stir in them the desired response, their speech has failed.

The work must go farther than merely finding failures. As faulty work is discovered, constructive help must be given to overcome the faults. If the composition fails to give real-life service, the reasons for the failure must be sought out and the remedy applied. What are the elements of success in speech? Three essentials stand out clearly: 1. Vitality, 2. Clearness,

3. Correctness. A speech must have life, or it cannot reach and hold the listener. It must be clear, or we cannot understand the message. It must be correct, or it will fail to carry over most effectively.

Suppose the application of the test has brought out that the language is lacking in any of these essential qualities. What then? The next step is to find definitely the source of the trouble. Criticism to be constructive must show in a tangible way the fault and point to the correction.

What are the tangible evidences of lifelessness in a composition, oral or written? First of all, a rambling use of words and sentences. Language that is thoroughly alive moves with steady, business-like steps towards its object. It wastes no words. Life is also shown in composition by the convincing quality of its sentences. Word vividness is another evidence of vitality.

Clearness is reflected by organization. Does the writer or speaker move from point to point with sureness? Can his talk on paper be outlined easily? Next, are his sentences constructed clearly? And finally, does he choose his words with exactness?

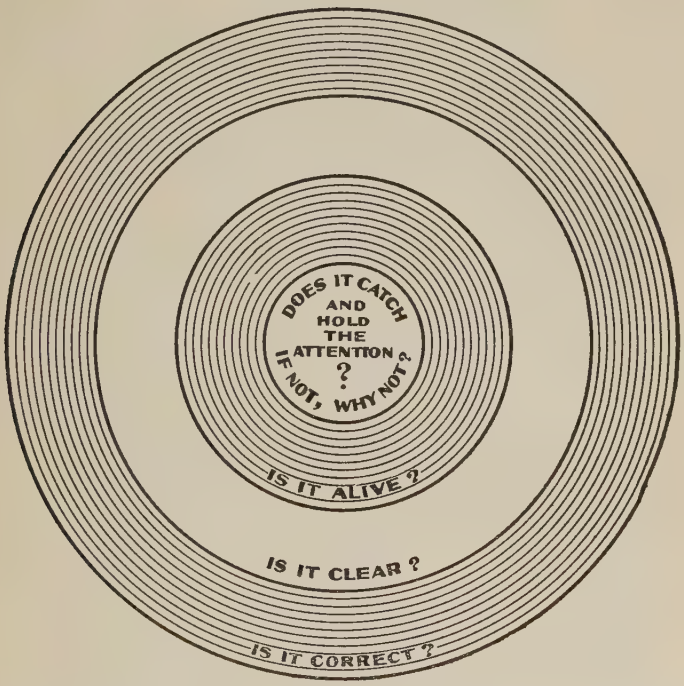
Correctness has to do, as is well known, with the proper choice of grammatical forms, with spelling, or if the expression be oral, with enunciation. It concerns itself with punctuation also; and it should give attention in speech to the vocal phrasing.

All of these points are graphically presented in the following test, which is offered here simply for discussion and experiment.

One point in this test deserves emphatic attention.

The life-giving qualities stand first in determining the value of language work.

Vitality in a composition is to be tested in two ways: 1. Has the speaker or writer chosen a theme that touches the quick of interest in his audience? 2. Does



he deal with the subject in such a way as to make it vibrant? The attention-holding, action-impelling qualities of language lie in these two life elements.

The interests of humanity are constantly on the firing line of thought and action. Speakers and writers must

be alert to catch the things of current interest, or to find the permanent interest life lines, and connect their messages with them. This explains the keenness of the reporter to follow the lead of the developing news—to anticipate it, if he can. The successful business man, too, is always trying to find the interests of his prospective customers. The poet that voices the heart of the people, must touch the chords of thought and feeling that are attuned to the lives of people in the living present. The world is ever moving; the interests of human kind have always a forward look.

Pupils should be trained to find the vital themes. Their efforts in composition need to be directed more to selecting the subjects that are alive and full of interest for others to whom they are to talk. How else can their work be worth while? Unless one can make a living thought contribution, has one a right to take other people's time? If these tests were applied, there would be far less time wasted on empty speech in the schoolroom. The ability to find the theme that vibrates, needs cultivating.

Skill to present the theme as something alive likewise needs developing. It takes effort to keep out of the language ruts; but it pays to do so. Thoughts tritely expressed generally fall on deaf ears. Of what use is it, therefore, to spend time using words if those words fail to reach and stir others to right thinking and right action? Having found a live subject, the learner should strive to make it live in the minds and hearts of his hearers. This is the prime test of success in composition.

Clearness likewise is absolutely essential. This

should go without saying; unfortunately it does not. Much of spoken and written language, as already clearly shown, lacks this necessary quality. There is constant need in all classes to train pupils to make their points not only so that they may be understood but so that they must be understood. Clearness of expression makes for the development of clearness and sanity in thinking.

Correctness must not be slighted simply because it is subordinated. A high standard in the mechanics must be held firmly before the pupils. Accuracy here is essential. At the same time the form side of language should not be allowed to crowd the more important phases of the work out of the way, nor should skill in the mechanics be rated so highly as to cause pupils to be content if they get only within this outward ring of the target.

Another point should be given attention. Correctness should concern itself with more than correct usage and spelling mistakes. Artistic enunciation, accuracy in the choice of words, and precision in punctuation may be just as essential to success as correct spelling and correct usage. A just and right balance in all of these necessary phases of language work is the thing most to be desired. This achieved, most of the controversy over relative values would cease. The thing needed is efficiency. All of the elements suggested in "the target test" are essential.

Our business is to train pupils to measure up to the real-life test. To recapitulate, this means: 1. They shall be trained to deal with vital themes in a way that

keeps them alive. 2. They should be trained to say things clearly. 3. Their tongues and fingers should also be trained to use the right forms of language with sureness and skill.

QUESTIONS

1. What is the chief objective—"the bull's-eye"—in the target, to be aimed at in all speech and writing?

2. Name in order of their relative value the three essentials necessary to make the composition strike the center of the target, and give reasons for the order in which you place these essentials.

3. In what two senses must a composition be vital? Illustrate.

4. Show by giving examples from papers gathered in the grades, high school, or college, why a study of clearness is so essential to success in language expression.

5. What is the main thing necessary to make sure that composition work will be kept free from mechanical errors?

EXERCISES

1. Prepare to participate in a round table discussion of "The Target Test" by making selections of three compositions that pass the test successfully. Choose these papers from the grades, from the high school, or from college. Be prepared to point out the qualities in each paper that make for its excellence in each of the things named under (a) vitality, (b) clearness, (c) correctness.

2. Compare a group of ordinary formal compositions with human-interest stories in the newspapers or magazines. Find from any good editor the reasons why he is unwilling to publish the compositions. How does he measure or test them?

A PRACTICAL DEMONSTRATION

How will such a plan of appraising compositions as that suggested under "The Target Test" work out in actual practice? A concrete answer to that question can be found in the following report of a survey of composition work.

A study of language teaching has been made in the various states of the Union. Practically all types of schools have been visited, and from many of these schools compositions have been taken.

One of the experiments made was carried on under approximately the same class conditions in ten different states. The sixth grade was chosen as a typical grade for the experiment, and a composition lesson was conducted in this grade in each of the schools of the states visited. The general subject selected was "Exciting Out-door Experiences."

The pupils, stimulated by questions and by personal experiences, were first led to talk freely. Usually they gave incidents connected with fishing, camping, riding horses, boating, hunting, trapping, and other similar activities. Most of the pupils had something worth telling and they were generally eager to express themselves.

When the interest in the subject was at its height, the work was changed from oral to written expression. The class was given an encouraging opportunity to

write their stories. No time limit was set. The pupils were kept as far as possible unhurried and unworried. It usually took them from fifteen to twenty minutes to produce the compositions. The papers, in uncorrected form, were gathered as fast as they were produced. The pupils did not even re-read them.

Several interesting features stand out in the results:

1. There was no essential difference in the experiences of the pupils. Even in cities of over a million inhabitants, the pupils revealed a wealth of incidents showing first-hand experiences with nature and a love for out-of-door life quite as keen as that found in the children of the country.

2. Approximately the same percentage of highest grade pupils and of lowest grade pupils were found in all of the classes.

Out of a total of 369 papers, 35, or approximately 9%, were of A grade; 39, or about 11%, were of E grade; while 295, or about 80%, belonged to the medium, or B-C-D groups.

3. The typical mistakes in sentence structure, diction, grammar, and spelling were essentially the same. The form side of the work is indicated by the following synopsis:

Mistakes to the number of 702 were found in spelling, or about two in each paper, while only 226 errors were made in violation of the rules of grammar. Of these errors, nearly 56% were due to a misuse of verb forms; $16^4/_9\%$ were mistakes in the choice of prepositions; 12% were mistakes in case; $7^1/_9\%$ were errors in the use of adjective forms for adverbs. The remaining mis-

cellaneous errors were divided about evenly among misused conjunctions and double negatives. Forty-seven per cent of all the errors in grammar were made on 15 forms.

Nearly 72% of the papers fell within or below the "C" grade represented by the specimens that follow. Are these results satisfactory? Do they not show clearly that there is great general need to raise our standards and to correct our methods in composition work? No teacher should be satisfied with the returns indicated here. Until the large majority of the class can be brought above the median line the work can scarcely be called successful.

The following compositions selected from the sets of papers taken from many states represent **the best, the medium, and the poorest** work found in each set of papers, appraised according to the test of vitality, clearness, and correctness.

Observe that the highest, or A grade, compositions, are not only **alive,** but **clear,** and, except for a slip here and there in mechanics, **correct.**

The medium, or C grade, compositions are lacking in vitality. They are not so sure in their sentence structure, and generally they contain more errors in grammar, spelling, and punctuation.

The poorest, or E grade, papers show a decided lack of life, clearness, and correctness, revealing in some cases almost subnormality in the pupil.

Illustrating the three-step scale, three groups of compositions are given, each containing the best, the medium, and the poorest work found in a set of papers.

These compositions are given just as they were written, and just as they were grouped, in order that teachers may study and compare them with the greatest possible profit.

It should be clearly understood that the following compositions are in no sense a measuring scale. They are given here merely as samples of the best, the medium, and the poorest compositions gathered during the survey. Nor do the grades given represent standard grading. They show merely the A-B-C or the A-B-C-D-E grades of that particular set of papers.

GROUP I

MY FIRST CATCH

(Best Grade)

One sunny day I was fishing in a quiet place overhung with trees and covered with vines. I had minnow bait. All of a sudden I felt a tug at my line. I waited till my catch tried to get away. Then I jerked. I was astonished when I saw on my line a large catfish. It was at least a foot and a half long. I had some trouble getting him out but I got him.

A SNAKE STORY

(Medium Grade)

Five boys and one gril had each a battery. We brook the batterys open and took the big black piece of chalk out, as we called it. The gril wanted all of them and we would not give them to her. She went over in the field and truned over a stone. She picked up a stick and put a copper head on the stick. She said if you boys don't give me the chalk I'll put this snake on you. We all handed them over and thats a gril for you.

A LOST COIN

(Poorest)

Once was walked up the street, and I look down in the gutter ther I saw a ten cents I pick it and throw it in the air trop write in the gutter and I never saw it again I will close

GROUP II

A BIG PRIZE

(Best Grade)

When I was at LaPlatte, I went fishing in a large lake. There was already a man there. It was about seven o'clock in the evening. The man was using some large bull frogs that he had caught when he was fishing in the Platte River.

The man was using a pole with a reel on it. He was throwing his line in the lake and then rewinding, when all of a sudden his line was given an awful jerk. He pulled and tugged, rewinding and then letting it out. Finally after about fifteen minutes, he landed his prize, which was a large cat fish. It was a beauty, being about four feet in length, and weighing about 35 pounds. The man picked the fish up and said to me, "If you catch a fish as large as this one, you will not want to fish any more to-night."

MY FIRST FISHING TRIP

(Medium Grade)

I can well remember my first fishing trip. I was but a very small child. My mother, my aunt and myself were going. We took our dinner. My aunt and my mother was very interested in Fishing When, all at once they heard a loud splash. I had fell into the river. When they got me out I was wet and muddy. I was crying very hard. I got dry and then we ate lunch. I caught a little fish. They caught a great many fish. It did not spoil my day after all of our hard luck.

A FISHING TRIP
(Poorest)

One day when we went fishing, I put in my throw line and wate for a bit, "we went doun strean" and when we came back my line was puld tity by a big fish and when I puld it out I had a hard time to get the fish ofer the line. Then I walk upon the bankt of the river, where some every boys were fishing and shown then my, they sed it was a buter.

GROUP III

MY EXCITING EXPERIENCE
(Best Grade)

One bright, cool, sunshiny day some girl-friends and I were walking along a road through the hills when somebody gave a cry of terror. Of course everybody thought something terrible was happening. The girl that had made the noise was at the lead, so we had to hustle to get up with her. She was so excited that she could hardly tell us what had happened. She didn't have to tell us, for there right in the middle of the road, was a large, fiery-looking snake. It was a blackish-greenish color. It kept crawling along, nearer to us than ever. It was no wonder that the girl was so frightened. The first thing the smaller girls decided was to run away. But some of the older girls who had more pluck, wished very much to see what it was going to do.

As I was saying the snake was crawling along when suddenly to our surprise the snake crawled back again. So that ended our exciting experience of the snake. We talked about it while we were going home. I shall never forget it.

AN EXCITING TRIP
(Medium Grade)

On the day of Nov. 25-1917, I was off the coasts of Porto Rico, an island in the Atlantic, with my brother.

As the ship went on, I was getting seasick, for it was the first time I ever traveled. After two days, I remembered it was the 27th of November, Thanks Giving Day.

We went down and after eating turkey and a lot of good things, we were all surprised to hear a holler of "A Submarine." All the people were frightened and praying with their lifebuoys on.

Me and my brother went up near the bridge of the ship, and heard the Wireless apparatus working.

The submarine was almost to fire a bomb at us, when a U. S. Destroyer was seen. The men in the submarine saw it and slowly submerged and in a jiffy was out of sight.

The Destroyer escorted us till the next day, after which we were safe.

On Nov. 30 we reached home safely.

SPANISH FLY

(Poorest)

They make up a game of spanish fly like this the get a lot of boy's they choose between them who is go to bill for the game, one boy will be it he will have to bend down. The first boy that is the leader who he does all the other boys follow, Jomnie dump the apple cart all the other boys does the same, the boy who does not knock him over is it there is lot of things that you can do The eagle grip the leader spread his hand out hand on the other fellow back and if the other fellow those does not know ut he is it.

A FIVE-STEP SCALE

The grading of compositions into five classes can easily be done in working with a scale of three steps. As one measuring expert suggests, "When there is any doubt as to whether the paper belongs to the highest (A) or medium (C) class, the doubt immediately places it in the second, or B, group. Likewise, if there is a question as to whether the composition belongs in the poorest (E) class, the question immediately gives it the fourth place, or a D grade, in the scale.

To illustrate the way this works out, the following type papers graded in five classes are given. Again, let it be said that this classification illustrates not a scientifically prepared scale, but simply shows the judgment of a practical teacher dealing in a practical way with a set of compositions.

GROUP I

THE LITTLE CUB

(Grade A)

Last summer we went up in the mountains on a camping trip. The place where we went was called Bear Creek Canyon.

One night as we were putting down the blanket on the ground to go to bed, we saw to shadows down by the creek. As they came closer we saw that it was a Mother bear and her baby. Daddy took his rifle and shot them.

We have the mother bear's skin at home in the parlor. Aunt Katherine has the cub's skin.

THE BLACK SNAKE

(Grade B)

About two summers ago I was visiting my Grandmother in the country. So one day another little girl that lived in the neighborhood came over and we decided to hunt bird's nests. We started for the woods and doing so we cut through the pasture there was a little grove of trees we had to pass. We were going along and all at once Lorene said, "There's a birds nest in that tree right there." I decided I would climb the tree and look in the nest and see if there were any eggs in it. So I started up the tree and when I got half way up I ran on to a big black snake I saw it just as my friend said, "Look out for the snake." I didn't go on up the tree but got down as soon as I could. I hollowed for my Grandfather and he came with the garden hoe and killed the snake. We measured it after it was dead and it

was five feet long. The snake was black so I diden't see it. But I never climbed a tree since that day.

RUN UP A TREE BY A STEER

(Grade C)

Once day early in the morning my dad told me to go out in the pasture and count the cattle.

I went into the barn to get my pony. But Dave the hired man just got through turning my pony out in the pasture, so I had to go on foot.

When I got there I climbed over the fence, and went over where the cattle were standing.

They were standing by a tree, so I went over in the shade of the tree and sat down.

All the sudden I heard something making a noise behind. I looked around and a steer was running after me, so I climbed the tree, and after the steer went I came down and I never counted cattle again with out my pony.

FISH STORY

(Grade D)

One time I was in Marchid and we fished. And there was a slipery place and the water wasent over and inch or to deap the and it was pavyed in that place so I was going to waide across. And just then a little gold fish went by and I thot I would try to catch it and I sliped into the water and and slid a long ways down in the shallow water but I cought the fish. And then I cought ahold of of a trunk of the tree and helped my self out.

(Grade E)

While I was down to one of the lakes, we took 9 larg rail road tiles and made a raft, when it was don took alarge box and sat it on the raft.

While we on the raft some kids thow a large piece of iron at us. it did not hit us, but it lite on the raft, amideny the raft became to sink. I cate a to tile which was float on the water and reach the sorth safly.

GROUP II

SHOCKED!

(Grade A)

One day the boys decided to keep people from handling the wires in front of our house. They intended to keep it a secret but I saw them working with some wires in the cellar and I went down and learned that anybody who would be so silly as to touch those wires out in front was going to get a shock. Soon the wires were ready so they fixed one end of the wire in the socket and the other end they tied to the wire out in front and hid it so that people could not see the wire. Then the boys turned the electricity on and we all stood around the wire afraid to touch it. I was standing rather close to the wire and my brother triped on something, fell over me and I fell on the wire right on my stomach. I just stuck there because I couldn't get away it just held me there. I yelled like all get out and the boys pulled me off and for two or three minutes afterward I shook all over, and I never stood near that wire when it was turned on again.

MY CATFISH

(Grade B)

One when I was at Blue Springs My aunt and my friend Robert and I went to the Blue River fishing.

We fished for quite a while. I was out in an old boat fishing. Bob went over nearer the dam. A man gave him a catfish. I caught a catfish. It was the first one I ever caught. I did'ent know what to do with it. I held it out over the water an asked Bob what I should do with it. It wiggled so much it fell off into the water again. I fished for a little while but did'ent catch any thing more.

THE TURTLE

(Grade C)

One day my brother went fishing and they didn't catch a fish but they got a turtle.

It was in the tub where I let my little toy ducks swim and I thought that it was a toy too.

I could squeez my ducks head and the we quack so I squeezed the turtle head to see if it would quack too The turtle didn't like the idea so it got hold of my finger. I yelled to the top of my lunges and all the neighbors come out to see what was the matter.

One man took the turtle off. And I never tuched one after ward.

CATCHING FROGS

(Grade D)

One day as I did not have anything to do I was going fishing and we were trying catch to some fish there was another boy with me and we keep seeing some frogs and after awhile he found a can so we decided to catch some frogs. We cot about a dozen it was late we went home. He live the closeses and when we got to his house I wanted me to take them home with me so I did so. When I got home my folks were out riding. When they got home and saw what I done they got mad. But the next day when I was at school they went out riding again they took the frogs with them and threw them in a pond.

ALMOST DRONDED

(Grade E)

it was about 3 ockloc in the after noon when I was in swiming in a river I forget the name of it but the curent was real strong and I was standing on the spring bord and it gave a sudden bend and it broke right in the rute of a tree and I went head long into the river I did not no what happend fore a long whill but when I awoke my was on a lot of grass and several boys aront me my head heart me very mutch I put my hand to it and I fond it was cut I asked them what was matter thay told me that I had been unconchus fore 10 minutes.

FRUITS OF FORMAL AND INFORMAL METHODS IN LANGUAGE TEACHING

The two sets of compositions which follow this explanation were produced by two different classes in different states. They were written during language lessons which were conducted by the same visiting teacher.

Practically the same conditions were created in both lessons. The pupils were stimulated, first to talk, then they were given an encouraging chance to write of their experiences. As fast as the compositions were finished they were collected. No pupil had the opportunity to re-read his work. The results tell the rest of the story.

What do these results reveal? In the first place they show that each of the regular teachers was skillful in getting the results she sought. In the second place, they show clearly the difference between the natural and the unnatural methods of teaching language.

The best, the medium grade, and the poorest of the compositions are represented in the selections from both sets of papers.

GROUP I

Compositions Showing the Effect of Formal Teaching

FOOLED

One day when William and I were walking in the woods I thought I had a worm. I looked at it very carefully and saw that I had a snake. I droped it admiately and ran for home. I think I was very careless.

THE WOUNDED BIRD

One day while I was taking a walk I saw a wounded bird lying on the sidewalk. The bird's foot was bleeding. I think he fell of a tree.

FISHING

One day my friend and I was catching sunfishes. I caught five sunfishes. My friend caught three. I think I will go fishing again next week if its a fine day.

A SAPPROW NEST

When we to our home on Bayard St. I found three nests made of straws. It belong to the sapprow. There were 5 white eggs in the nest. I think it was a fine nest.

CHASING A RABIT

Last week I went out in the woods to play with the birds. As I looked backwards I saw a rabit. I chased after the rabit. On the way I picked a stick and hit him. I think he was a daredevel because I could not catch him.

A WALK IN THE WOODS

O Sunday my friend Joseph and I were walking in the woods. Joseph seen a rabbit he was running after it. He caught him and brough him home. A man said that he will give him a dollar for it. I think he was a lucky fellow.

TRICKS

Last night I saw four rabbits doing tricks. One of them stood on him hine legs when the master struck his finger he would jump on his front legs. I think they are tamed.

THE BLACK SNAKE

One day my brother and I were picking apples in the sand pit. While we were picking I saw a black snake. I got so frighten that I dump all my apples out. I think I will not run away from black snakes again.

IN A COUNTRY FIELD

One Sunday I went to the country. I went to the field on my grandmother's farm. There I saw white vololits and butter cup. I think it is lovely to live in the country.

A WALK IN THE WOOD'S

Yesterday John and I took a walk in the wood's. John saw a rabit and kill it. I think that rabit was to nice to kill.

GROUP II

Compositions Showing the Result of Natural Methods in Language Teaching

TRYING TO SAVE A BIRD

One day my brother John came into the house with something precious. It was a little bird that could not fly.

We got some salve and put it on the broken wing. It lived for several days in happiness. On the third day the bird died. We took a chocolate box with paper lace and put the bird in it and bired it under a rose bush.

A BIRD STORY

One day I and a friend of mine were climbing trees in my uncles yard.

When we were about as high as we could get we say a birds nest.

There was one egg in the nest. The next day we came to have another look, when we got there we found two eggs. Three days after that we found five eggs.

But the next day the nest was at the bottom of the tree and five broken eggs told the mute story.

We never saw the mother bird. But we often did wonder who did it.

THE WAY I SAVED A BIRD

One summer day as I was playing in the yard, I heard the sharp crack of a gun. My first thought was to find out what it was.

So I left my play and went into the orchard. There I found two boys who had guns. I asked them what they were doing.

"Shooting birds," was the reply.

"You must not shoot birds," I said and they didn't.

Then I went to one side of the orchard and found a bird with a broken wing. I took it to the house and cared for it until it could fly. When I turned it loose it would not go away. It stayed around for one month and then disappeared.

A EXPERIENCE

In the spring there came a father and moher canary. I watched them build there nests. After the built their nests the mother raised their babies.

One day the wind blew the nest out of the tree and all the little birds fell out. Mother and I went out and out the nest up in the tree all the little birds were chirping and they were hard to catch.

The mother bird was flying around our heads and scholding us.

The next summer the tree was cut down and I did not see the birds any more.

FINDING A BIRDS NEST

One day while I was out playing I saw a bird's nest. A little ways off was a couple of little birds. The wind had blown the nest out of the tree, and when it fell the birds fell out.

I took the nest and put the baby birds in it and put the nest back in the tree. After a few months the same birds were flying about and getting their own food.

ALMOST CAUGHT

One nice day when I was out in our yard I saw sparrow light in a little tree. And to my surprise I saw a big cat creeping up after the bird. The cat gave a leap it was to late the bird flew.

BIRD EXPERIENCE

Once when I was picking plums I saw a little nest. It had four little eggs in. I think it was a meadow larks because it was

in some grass. The eggs were white. When I first saw it I was going to break the eggs because I thought it was a sparrow's.

A BAD DOG

One time when I was out picking chocke cherries I happen to look in one part of the bush where there was a bird's nest. The bird was a Brown Thrush. My dog was along with us. We chased the bird away. When we got home I tied him up for one hour.

Group one gives unmistakable evidence that the teacher had been working directly to develop a "sentence sense." The pupils, too, had been trained to begin and to end their compositions in a formal way. It is interesting to note that out of twenty-six compositions, twenty of them were brought to a close with sentences which begin "I think," or "I thought."

This group of papers came from a class composed entirely of fifth grade pupils. The second group of papers came from a mixed class of fifth and sixth grade pupils.

As will plainly be seen, the second set is characterized by a naturalness and spontaneity of expression which is delightful. The "sentence sense" is almost, if not quite, as sure as in the formal compositions and there is no greater proportion of mechanical errors.

QUESTIONS

1. What definite help in appraising compositions would be given teachers by a carefully prepared three-step scale made up of genuine compositions?

2. Show how the teacher using such a scale might readily grade papers into five groups if desired.

3. After studying carefully the compositions given in the three-step scales in this chapter, point out (a) The qualities in the "A" compositions that entitle them to first place; (b) The reason why the "C" compositions do not reach the highest standard; (c) The cause of failure in the "E" papers.

4. Make a comparative study of the two sets of compositions given to show the fruits of formal and informal teaching of composition. How do these results show strength in the regular teachers of both classes? What do they reveal as to the relative value of natural and unnatural methods in language work?

EXERCISES

1. Let each member of the class carry out the following experiment either personally or through some teacher willing to join:

a. Select a general subject close to the life of the pupils to be taught; as, "A Street Accident," "A Fire," "A Runaway," "A True Fish Story," "Fun in the Woods," "An Animal Story," "A Pen Picture of Some Person or Scene," "A True Fireside Story from An Older Person."

b. After leading the pupils to talk on one of these subjects for a few moments, let them write their stories or sketches. Gather the papers as fast as they are produced.

c. Grade the papers into three or five classes. Tabulate the results, and be ready to join in a discussion of the returns with your associates. Compare with the compositions in the three and five-step scales given in this chapter the best, the medium grade, and the poorest compositions you get.

VI

VITALIZING GRAMMAR

Grammar should be taught not **apart from** but as **a part of language.** Thus taught it may be infused with life and turned to real service.

APPLYING THE SERVICE TEST

Grammar to be vitalized must be taught not apart from but as a part of daily-life language. Thus taught it becomes a living study. In old time practice, far too common yet in our schools, the subject was formalized, not vitalized. It was made merely a series of exercises on the facts and formulas of speech. Little, if any, emphasis was given to the application of this knowledge in everyday language. The practical results were disappointing.

My first contact with the study of grammar came when I was a pupil in the old "fifth reader class," now called the eighth grade. It was introduced then in the schools of this country as an optional subject. Boy like, I chose not to take it. Later I had a good deal of secret satisfaction in this decision; for the subject was made so persecutingly formal that every one in the class disliked it. I remember well how I used to listen to my classmates running over the old conjugation, "I love, you love, he loves," and wonder what the "lingo" was all about.

When I entered a certain academy a year or so afterwards, grammar was required. It might properly have been called "diagrammar." Literally we diagramed every kind of sentence imaginable, from "Squirrels climb" to those found in Milton's "Sonnet on his Blindness," which was given in the final test. I must

have become rather adept in the process, for I won 97 per cent, the highest mark given in the class that year.

A month later, however, when I took another examination to get a teacher's certificate, I lost my laurels. The examiners asked me a few practical questions involving the use of grammar in daily speech. It was a fair test; but it caught me unawares. Our teacher had never suggested to us that grammar is a useful subject. As a consequence, my grade took a sudden drop from 97 to 60. On recovering from this shock to my pride, I asked myself seriously, "What is the use?"

"What is the use of grammar?" has been a persistent question with me ever since.

In these days when everything and everybody must count for something or be counted out, a satisfactory answer must be given to that question, or grammar is in grave danger of being swept out of the curriculum. Some daring educational leaders, indeed, dissatisfied with the meager returns that have come from the study, have already eliminated formal grammar from their schools. The devotees of the subject, on the other hand, with a vague but tenacious belief in its disciplinary and cultural value, are still clinging desperately to it. Neither of these extremes can be right. There must be a sensible middle ground on which all can firmly stand. It is our business to find it.

What is the use of grammar? The question was put recently to an audience of more than a thousand teachers. After a moment of silence, one man broke the tension and provoked laughter by saying, "Well, it

has helped me out of a tight place in an examination several times."

"There is only one use of grammar," boldly asserts an authority on English in a book which issued recently from the press of a reputable publishing house, "and that is to teach the principles underlying correct usage."

Justifying correct usage is not the only use of grammar. It has an even greater value in the help it offers in sentence building. To be clear and sure in speech, one must know and follow in every sentence the fundamental principles of sentence structure. It would be nearer the truth to say, **There are two practical results to come from a study of grammar: Correct usage, and skill in sentence building.** Whether these valuable returns do come, however, depends directly on how the subject is taught.

Old-time methods have proved ineffective. Why? Simply because they failed to connect grammar with life. The subject was not made usable or vital in everyday language. It was rather a series of empty exercises in classifying and parsing parts of speech, analyzing and diagraming sentences, memorizing definitions that do not define, and learning rules that are cancelled for the most part by exceptions. So long as this constitutes the teaching of grammar, so long may we expect the subject to be both lifeless and useless. Just the moment that teachers turn their attention to developing essential principles that underlie effective speech, and to cultivating right habits in language, then will grammar take and hold its rightful place in the curriculum.

Every essential principle in grammar can be best

taught from the use viewpoint. Every lesson in the subject should be applied. Skill to use the forms of speech rightly comes not from learning facts and rules, but from well guided practice in speaking correctly. Neither will diagraming sentences alone give ability in sentence building. To learn to build, one must be trained in building.

There is no thought here to be unfair to these time-honored practices in teaching grammar. Classifying, parsing, conjugating, diagraming, all have their place, a subordinate one, however, in the study of the subject. The trouble is that these processes have been used without a clear understanding as to their meaning and purpose in the scheme of language teaching, and with little or no practical application.

The diagram has been aimlessly used. It is an ingenious enough device—**to teach pupils how to read.** It was created primarily to promote facility in analyzing sentences, not in constructing them. Employed sparingly, with this end clearly in view, the device may be made helpful. Here, however, the question has been raised, "Does the diagram give help or hindrance even in sentence analysis?" Some teachers are strong in its defense. Others hold that it is a crutch on which the pupil may lean too much.

Certain it is that the help offered by the diagram has been abused. By most teachers the diagram has been made not a means, but an end in itself. Too often also, because it is an easy, not to say lazy, device to keep pupils busy, it has stolen time from far more valuable exercises. This is an inexcusable waste of child life.

As to sentence analysis, its value in developing skill to build sentences has been greatly over-estimated. Analysis bears to sentence building about the same relation that taking a watch to pieces bears to watch making. Indirectly it helps, of course; but to become skillful either in constructing sentences or in creating watches, one must do much more than merely take them apart. Constructive ability comes mainly from training in construction. Sentence structure may best be taught not from the analytical but from the constructive viewpoint. The pupil should be given the essential principles of sentence building while building them. Thus connected with his own language, they can be made most vital and their effective use in his every day speech assured.

All of the principles of grammar, indeed, to be vitalized, must be taught, as already said, not **apart from,** but as **a part of** living language. So to teach grammar is to prune the subject of its dead limbs, to give it motive and meaning, to make it something more than a mere grinding out of language facts.

The teacher of a sixth grade class was giving a lesson on the adverb before her superintendent and a visitor. The pupils showed that they had been skillfully taught. They could pick out adverbs from almost any sentence without mistake. They knew the definition of that part of speech perfectly.

"What is the matter with that lesson?" asked the superintendent.

"It is an excellent example of the old type of grammar teaching," responded the visitor.

"How would you teach the adverb differently?" came the challenging question.

"Shall we see?"

"Certainly."

The visitor stepped before the class and asked: "What is an adverb?"

"It is a word that modifies a verb, adjective, or other adverb," came the quick reply.

"Yes, but what is it good for?"

The pupils were puzzled.

"Of what use is an adverb in a sentence?"

"Oh, it adds something to the meaning of a verb," ventured a pupil.

"Does **it add** or **subtract?**"

The pupils had nothing to say, but their faces showed interest.

"Give a sentence containing an adverb."

"The horse ran **rapidly** down the street," said a pupil.

"Very well. And do you think **rapidly** adds something to the verb?"

"Yes."

"We must agree that it does; but which one of you can send the horse down the street faster and not use an adverb?"

The class was alive with interest now, puzzling out the question.

Finally one boy said: "The horse **raced** down the street." "Dashed," suggested a girl.

"What expression should you rather choose, **ran rapidly** or **raced?**"

"Raced," was the unanimous decision.

"Why?"

"Because it has more life in it;" "We see the horse more clearly," were some of the reasons offered.

"Now I think you can see my point when I say that the adverb may at times add strength to a sentence, but often it seems rather to subtract. We certainly should not use two words when one will do the work better."

"When you go home to-night take your newspapers and see how many times the reporters seem to avoid the use of adverbs."

The thought vivified by this illustration finds application in every lesson in grammar. It should be the effort of teachers constantly to vitalize their points by connecting them with living language. Unless the lesson has a present connection, and a forward look, it is a failure, no matter how well the facts are taught.

Grammar, it should be remembered, is not so much a matter of fact as of feeling. Rules, definitions, classifications—all of the formulas of speech, are void and meaningless unless they are so taught as to reach and quicken the language consciousness. The fundamental principles of grammar must really be felt, to be known and applied.

QUESTIONS

1. Explain and illustrate the difference between a formal exercise in grammar and a vitalized lesson in the same work.

2. Why should the grammar lesson be taught from the "use viewpoint"?

3. What are the two practical uses to come from a study of grammar? Illustrate each clearly.

4. By what methods may the habits of speaking correctly best be fixed?

5. Why is diagraming sentences in itself not sufficient training to give the pupil skill in sentence building? How may such skill best be cultivated?

EXERCISES

1. Choosing one of the following as a topic sentence, develop a brief, clear paragraph, amplifying the thought:

   a. Grammar has been formalized, not vitalized.

   b. Grammar is not so much a matter of fact as of feeling.

   c. The principles of grammar should be taught not apart from but as a part of living language.

Be ready to read your paragraph and discuss it and others with your associates in this work.

2. Find in any good newspaper five sentences showing that the writer avoided the use of adverbs.

3. What are the simplest rules of grammar followed in any good newspaper office? Find from the best editors the answer to this question.

CORNERSTONES IN SENTENCE BUILDING

Skill in speech or in writing is based primarily on a good working knowledge of sentence structure. To be able to build clear, convincing sentences, one must know from a practical viewpoint how such sentences are built. An applied study of sentence building is therefore of fundamental importance in the language course.

The urgent general need for such a study was clearly shown in the results that came from the composition survey recently made throughout a score of states. Most of the compositions gathered during this survey, both from elementary and high school classes, were characterized by faulty sentence structure. Five type faults prevailed:

1. **Failure to make complete sentences.** Clauses, participial phrases, and other word groups were often left "hanging in the air;" for example:

a. One morning when I was playing with my little brother in the back yard.

b. One day when I was in the woods picking flowers with some of my friends.

c. Which was very risky business for the pony was not very tame.

d. And the Indians hated the white men. And caused them many troubles.

2. **Lack of sentence unity.** The running of sen-

tences together with or without connectives, was a very common fault; for example:

a. When we was out fishing we caught a lot of fish, most of them were catfish we was with another family and the boy called to us we went up where he was and he said, 'There was some turtles there.'

b. We had some potatoes which we baked when they were baked the boys were fighting for their potatoes this hermit settle their argument and he always gives us potatoes.

3. **Failure to subordinate properly less important parts of the sentence.** The stringing of sentences together with "and" and other co-ördinating connectives was the rule rather than the exception in the elementary grades. In high school compositions the fault was still frequently found. The following sentences from the elementary grades are typical:

a. I was riding a horse named Shorty and a wagon went by and he bucked me off because he had never been out on the road before and I never rode that horse again.

b. I went down to the lake and there the water was about all gone and the fish were just thick so I went and told papa and he came with a pitchfork and got ten fish and Mr. Sheldon got eleven.

4. **Failure to place rightly the modifying and other elements within the sentence.** The jumbling of the sentence structure was very frequent; for illustration:

a. We had to get strong sticks first because the rock was very steep so that if we did not have them we would surely fall.

b. We went into a large timber and decided to make a log pile we came upon our headquarters.

c. It knocked the horse unconscious while it smashed the wagon with about fifteen boxes of milk into the street.

5. **A general monotony of sentence structure.** Most of the papers were wanting that variety which puts "the spice of life" into composition. Few of the pupils seemed to know anything about transposing parts of the sentence in order to give it a more convincing quality. If any teaching had been given on this point it had certainly failed to carry over into practice.

Occasionally a pupil was found who seemed to have a native grace and clearness of construction. Probably ten per cent of the compositions moved with an ease and sureness of step in their sentence structure. The following are a few sentences selected from such papers:

a. Some of the older girls who had more pluck wished to see what the snake was going to do.

b. When I saw my boat begin to float away, I slid down the bank and fell 'splash' into the water.

c. I sank very rapidly, but my father stepped on a post that protruded from the water and caught me just in time to save me from drowning.

d. We waited it seemed to me several hours before we caught anything.

e. With a pole and a can of grasshoppers we went to the creek, dreaming of the many fish we were going to catch.

f. We had more fun pushing the boat than we did catching the fish.

g. I felt a nibble and jerked my line up.

h. It was a woody tract of land with a muddy river, called the Nemaha, running through it.

The vital questions are: How can pupils best be trained to produce more of these well-built sentences? By what

practical plan can they be led to express themselves clearly and gracefully?

This desired result will certainly not come merely from teaching facts about sentences. Nor can it be achieved simply by analyzing and diagraming lists of sentences. **The thing most needed is positive training in sentence building coupled with a study of good models taken from living literature.**

Such a study should aim, not in a formal way, but by natural methods to cultivate in the pupil:

1. A sure "sentence sense."
2. Ability to build unified sentences.
3. Facility in placing properly the various words and groups of words within the sentence.

With these essentials mastered, most of the faults in sentence building would disappear.

A sure "sentence sense" must be gained while the pupil studies the sentence constructively in building paragraphs to express his own thoughts and experiences.

The sentence ordinarily does not occur alone. It is generally a unit within a larger unit. As the pupil is given opportunity to express himself on real-life subjects, he may well be trained to make his thoughts move forward one sentence step at a time and to express his thoughts in well-rounded sentences. It is helpful here to teach him that the sentences in a narrative paragraph are like links in a chain. Each sentence is complete; yet each should be linked naturally with other sentences one after another to develop the story. For illustration, observe how the sentences in the following paragraphs follow one another in natural order:

"The fellow knew no English and did not understand, so he simply said, 'Sekki-yah!' and the donkey was off again like a shot. He turned the corner suddenly, and Blucher went over his head. And, to speak truly, every mule stumbled over the two, and the whole cavalcade was piled up in a heap. No harm done. A fall from one of those donkeys is of little more consequence than rolling off a sofa."—*Mark Twain* in *Innocents Abroad.*

In the effectively built explanatory or descriptive paragraph, the sentences are more like spokes in a wheel. They are connected closely with the topic, or hub thought of the paragraph, one by one until the whole topic is rounded out; for illustration:

"The drones have the least enviable time of it. Their foothold in the hive is very precarious. They look like the giants, the lords of the swarm, but they are really the tools. Their loud threatening hum has no sting to back it up, and their size and noise make them only more conspicuous marks for the birds."—*John Burroughs* in *Pastoral Bees.*

Study of well constructed paragraphs like the foregoing will be helpful in developing a "sentence sense." The best way, however, to make the pupil really feel what a sentence is, is to train him day by day in building sentences to express his own thoughts and experiences.

Ability to build unified sentences is best acquired likewise by a study of sentences applied through practice in building them. A helpful exercise here is drill in finding the "core" or central thought of well-constructed sentences. To train the pupil to recognize quickly the main subject and predicate, is to help him both to read with facility and also to build well-unified sentences of his own.

Facility in handling rightly the various elements within the sentence is likewise predicated on a clear understanding of those elements. One thing of especial importance in this connection is to make clear to the learner the **essential unity of the word group.**

The phrase and the clause are each practically as one word in function. For illustration: We went **yesterday.** We went **in the morning.** We went **before the sun rose.** The phrase and the clause used here, like the word **yesterday,** answer the question, When? Every phrase and clause used as an element within the sentence likewise performs but a single office. This principle, made plain to the pupil, will clear away many difficulties now met with in analyzing sentences.

The essential unity of the word group is most clearly shown in the idiom. This element, which does so much to give individuality and life to any language, has a structure peculiar to itself. Taken apart it is meaningless; taken as a unit it is fraught with meaning.

For illustration: He was **well-to-do.** The old squire would not **put up with** any nonsense. The pony rider managed **to streak by** in the night.

An idiom may perform the office of adjective, verb, or other part of speech. It is not capable of further analysis. A great deal of time has been thrown away trying to diagram idioms. **The idiom cannot be explained according to any of the regular rules of grammar.** It is an outlaw in speech. Nevertheless, because of the service it performs, it has been accepted into good usage. Grammarians often ignore this vital language

element. To do so is to invite trouble. Better far face fairly the problems presented by the idiom and deal with this peculiar structure according to its own merits. Pupils should be trained to recognize the idiom and to use it if by so doing they can make their sentences more effective.

The sentence, to be effective, must be at once **clear, correct, concise,** and **convincing.** None of these essential qualities can be assured unless the speaker or the writer, as before said, has a good working knowledge of the basic principles of sentence structure.

Clearness is the quality of first importance. The sentence, to convey thought and feeling effectively, must say plainly what is meant to be said. Ambiguous or misty sentences defeat their own purpose. How shall the sentence be made clear? On what does this first quality depend?

The following directions are most helpful here:

1. Say one thing at a time.
2. Keep modifying words and word groups in their proper places.
3. Make sure that the antecedent of the pronoun is clear.
4. See that each participle connects closely with its subject.
5. Use conjunctions and prepositions with care.

The careful following of these practical suggestions would prevent most of the faulty sentence structure that makes against clearness of speech.

Correctness, another quality of prime importance in sentence building, is also made surer by an intelligent knowledge of sentence structure.

But since correct usage is dependent for the most part on the right choice of word forms, a discussion of it will best be taken up in connection with inflections.

Conciseness, the third essential named, is closely allied to clearness. Waste of words in sentences makes against plainness and force of expression. Every word in the sentence should be made to carry meaning. How can the pupil be trained thus to build his sentences? Mainly by observing these two practical suggestions:

1. Avoid redundancies, such as the double negatives, "have got," expressions like "John he," unnecessary "ands," and superfluous adjectives, as, "a great big, monstrous bear."

2. Reduce clauses to phrases and phrases to words, whenever this can be done with distinct advantage in clearness.

The sentence may often be materially shortened by using the infinitive; thus:

I went in order that I might see my mother.
I went to see my mother.

The infinitive is a kind of idiomatic "short cut" in language. A pupil will get a clearer idea of this usually troublesome element when he is led to see its practical uses.

The participial phrase, too, is generally a shortened relative clause; for example:

The boy, who was running down the street, stumbled and fell.
The boy, running down the street, stumbled and fell.

The tree, which had been broken by the storm, lay across the road.

The tree, broken by the storm, lay across the road.

So too, the appositive is nothing else than a reduced clause. Thus, instead of: Henry, who is the blacksmith, lives near the creek; we may use: Henry, the blacksmith, lives near the creek.

The chief point here to be emphasized, is this: **The principles of sentence structure that make for conciseness should be taught from the use viewpoint.** The difficulties ordinarily met in teaching participles, infinitives, and other sentence elements might be greatly overcome if the practical side of these useful elements were clearly shown.

The same thought applies also to the making of a sentence convincing or forceful. A thing said does not amount to much unless it is well said. Whether the sentence is constructed so that the thought is well said, depends primarily on the application of certain fundamental principles of construction. These principles should be so taught as to be made useful and applicable in daily life language.

All teachers of grammar, for example, teach active and passive voice. What use is made of the knowledge? What is the practical value in changing the voice of the verb? Few teachers, it would seem, make the use of this change clear to their pupils.

The chief reason for the change of voice in any sentence is to place the emphasis where it belongs in order to put the thought more convincingly.

Observe, for illustration, these sentences from Patrick Henry's famous speech:

"We have petitioned." "Our petitions have been slighted."
"We have supplicated." "Our supplications have been disregarded."

What is the effect of this shifting of the subject? It simply keeps the emphasis where it belongs.

Or take this sentence from *Rip Van Winkle:* "My very dog has forgotten me!" Suppose Irving had said, "I am forgotten by my very dog." What would the sentence have lost in strength? An intelligent use of the passive and active forms is vital.

There are other changes in structure which vitalize the sentence. Besides changing the voice of the verb, the sentence may be made more convincing or forceful,

1. By transposing, or placing out of their natural order, various parts of the sentence, thus: "Beneath in the churchyard lay the dead." Suppose Longfellow had said, "The dead lay in the churchyard beneath," the effect would have been to lessen greatly the force of his sentence.

2. By use of direct for indirect discourse; thus:
The captain told his men to halt.
"Halt!" commanded the captain.

3. By subordinating the elements of least importance; thus: The hunter waded down the stream and threw the Indians off his trail.

The hunter, wading down the stream, threw the Indians off his trail.

A good deal has been said about cultivating a "sentence sense" in the pupil. He needs not only a

true "sentence sense," but "a sense of subordination," "a sense of modification," "a sense of emphasis," and a general "sense of word fitness" if he is to build sentences effectively.

With these different grammatical senses well developed, he will be far better able to construct sentences that are not only clear and correct, but concise and convincing.

It is not enough to teach the facts about these essential principles of sentence structure. They must be vitalized by practical application in every day usage if the pupil is really to know and to feel what they mean. To encourage pupils to apply these sentence facts in all their necessary work, is to lay a sound foundation for right life habits in sentence building.

QUESTIONS

1. What are the essentials of an effectively built sentence? Illustrate.

2. What essential thing should be learned about word groups?

3. Show four ways by which the sentence is made concise. What is the practical value of concise language in daily life?

4. Explain the effect of the following grammatical changes on the convincing quality of the sentence: 1. Transposition; 2. Subordination; 3. Change of voice; 4. Change from declarative to interrogative form. Illustrate your explanation.

EXERCISES

1. Select from a newspaper or magazine of current issue a paragraph of sentences that seem to you at once clear, correct, concise, and convincing. Share the paragraph you select by reading it to your group, who will read like selections. Why are some paragraphs more interesting than others?

2. Select a paragraph from work you have previously prepared. In what respects does it fail to show the four essentials of sentence structure?

3. Make a comparative study of the sentences used by an interesting speaker with those used by a dull speaker. What essential difference do you observe?

THE PARTS OF SPEECH IN USE

Essentially there are but five parts to be performed by words or groups of words in sentence building. They may act as **substantives,** as **assertives,** as **modifiers,** as **connectives,** or they may be used as **independent** elements to cast different shades of feeling over the sentence as a whole. These essential uses the pupil must be trained to recognize and to feel if he is to get a practical understanding of the parts of speech.

The substantive is the naming element. It indicates the object or idea to be talked about. Generally it is either a noun or a pronoun. Frequently we find phrases and clauses used substantively. For illustration: *Over the fence* is out. *His going now* will make no difference. I did *whatever I pleased.*

There are three main things of practical use to be learned in dealing with the noun:

1. The capitalization of proper nouns.
2. The agreement of the verb with the collective noun, which is usually regarded as singular in number.
3. The spelling of the various forms expressive of changes in number, in genitive case, and in gender.

There are two general rules of practical use to be mastered concerning the pronoun:

1. Keep the antecedent clear.
2. Choose the right case forms.

Most of the difficulty in keeping the antecedent of the

pronoun clear comes in sentences containing indirect discourse; for example: The scout told the captain that if he should get killed he should lead the men back to the fort. The best way to correct such a fault is generally to use a direct quotation; as, "If I am killed," said the scout to the captain, "lead the men back to the fort." A comparative study of direct and indirect quotations would help greatly in eliminating this common fault.

Substantive phrases and clauses, to be handled most effectively, must be regarded as units. The pupil, thinking of these word groups as essentially one thing in effect and function, finds little difficulty in using them correctly. Essentially there are but five places to be filled by the group of words used substantively. They are found in common use: 1. As subject; *Climbing the hill* was pleasant. 2. As direct object; I promised *to come.* 3. As predicate nominative; The question was, *Could it be done?* 4. Following a preposition; He talked of *going to war.* 5. In apposition; The fact *that he had the money* proves his guilt. If other uses are found at all, they are so infrequent as, for practical purposes, to need little attention. The substantive, indeed, presents comparatively little trouble either to understand or to use correctly.

The verb is the element that calls for the most careful consideration. To know the verb thoroughly is to hold the master key to the sentence. With this knowledge one may unlock almost any combination of phrases and clauses used in sentence building.

The verb is the vitalizing element. It is the part of speech that puts action and life into language. Not all

verbs express action, it is true, but practically all of the action expressed in our speech comes either from the verb or from some other part of speech derived from it. For illustration:

> "So *came* the captain with the mighty heart;
> And when the *step* of *earthquake shook* the house,
> *Wrenching* the rafters from their ancient *hold*,
> He *held* the ridge-pole up and *spiked* again
> The rafters of the home. He *held* his place—
> *Held* the long purpose like a *growing* tree—
> Held on through *blame* and faltered not at *praise*.
> And when he *fell* in whirlwind, he *went* down
> As when a kingly cedar green with boughs
> *Goes* down with a great *shout* upon the hills."

A moment's study of the italicized words will reveal that these life-giving expressions are either verbs, or nouns and adjectives originating from verb forms. The vitality of speech, as here shown, is thus directly or indirectly dependent on this active element of language.

Action in the sentence is expressed in three ways:

1. By **assertion;** as, The birds *were singing* gayly in the trees. Here *were singing* asserts the action and makes a **predicative verb.**

2. By **assumption;** as, The birds, *singing* gayly in the trees, made the morning cheerful. In this sentence the singing is assumed, not asserted, by the **participle,** or **non-predicative** verb.

3. By **suggestion;** as, The *singing* birds made the morning cheerful. The singing here is merely suggested by the verbal adjective.

In teaching the verb it is of fundamental importance that the child be made to feel these different ways of expressing action. This done, the difficulties usually met in studying verbs and verbals may be readily cleared

away, and the effective use of these verbal elements assured.

The predicative and the non-predicative verbs are alike in four ways:

1. They express action or being.
2. They may take adverbial modifiers.
3. They have subjects, either expressed or implied.
4. They may take the same kind of complements:

(a) Predicative: We *found* the trail quickly.

(b) Non-Predicative: *Finding* the trail quickly, or, We hoped *to find* the trail quickly.

In only one essential are these two kinds of verbs different. The predicative verb asserts whatever action or being is expressed; the non-predicative verb assumes it. For this reason the non-predicative verb can not by itself make a predicate. Infinitives must be supplemented by predicative verbs before a sentence can be formed; as,

To go *was* to invite criticism.

The participle must be given the help of an auxiliary to make a predicative verb; as,

The tree, *broken* by the storm, lay across the trail.
The tree, which *was broken* by the storm, lay across the trail.

As here shown, **the participial phrase is essentially but an adjective clause with the relative pronoun and the auxiliary omitted.**

These non-predicative verbs are most helpful in sentence making. By means of them the sentence may be materially shortened, or subordinate ideas may be

slipped into it gracefully without loss of the life-giving qualities possessed by the predicative verb. It is these practical uses of infinitives and participles that the pupil should be led to feel and to apply.

Verbal adjectives and verbal nouns also may be used to advantage. They are like verbs only in the fact that they suggest action. Otherwise they are essentially modifiers or substantives in function. Thus we may speak of "running brooks and singing streams," or with Clement C. Moore say:

> "A *wink* of his eye and a *twist* of his head
> Soon gave me to know I had nothing to dread."

Such active nouns and adjectives, suggesting movement, add touches of life to the sentence.

Another essential to be emphasized in dealing with the verb is the fundamental difference between transitive and intransitive verbs. Usually this is given as a matter of fact, not of feeling. To teach the transitive verb, as many teachers do, merely as a verb which requires an object to complete its meaning, is to mystify the pupil and to invite further trouble. Most pupils, so taught, think of the passive verb as being intransitive.

The thing most necessary here is to make the learner feel that the transitiveness lies not in the object, but in the verb itself.

Certain verbs express action which in its very nature concerns something other than the actor. Thus when one says, **break, take, bring, tell, ask, lift, raise,** the hearer naturally inquires, "Take what?" "Break what?" and so on. The same would be true if one should

say, **is broken, was taken, will be brought.** What **is broken?** What **was taken?** What **will be brought?** The **transitiveness** is as plainly evident in passive as in active verbs. The action expressed in both calls for something which receives or seems to receive the action.

On the other hand, when one says, **laugh, jump, smile, come, go, wait, sit,** the hearer thinks of the action only in regard to himself. The action expressed by these verbs is intransitive; it does not "carry over," but is concerned only with the actor.

The verb "to be" is intransitive in all of its forms, since it expresses no action at all. For example: He **is** a man of honor. **Is** here merely links **man** to the subject **he.**

From a practical viewpoint, this distinction between transitive and intransitive verbs is doubly valuable. 1. It enables the pupil to use rightly and with assurance the various forms of these six troublesome verbs: **lie, lay, sit, set, rise, raise.** 2. It promotes facility in predicate building—a less tangible but even more valuable application of the knowledge.

On the vigor of the verb depends the strength of the sentence. This is the vital point to be impressed on the pupil and worked out in practice. Growth in language is to be measured largely by increasing effectiveness in the use of the verb elements. The early plays of Shakespeare, scholars have pointed out, are marked by many adjectives; his later, more virile plays reveal the verb as the dominating element. The pupil, led to feel the force of the verb and trained to use it skillfully, will likewise

show a growth in strength and skill in the use of language.

The adjective has a distinctive part to play as the picturing element in the sentence—the descriptive adjective. Used effectively it helps in making artistic the word pictures of life. Observe for example, the skillful use of adjectives in the following description.

"On another night there was a sunset of wondrous color. The sun, a golden ball, slid into the lake, leaving a sky of peaceful blue in which rested long, golden bars. Then the gold caught fire, and the heavens were aflame with color and light. Above, on the beach, a horn blew out in joyous, exultant blasts. Gradually the rainbow colors faded and the flaming cloud streamers melted away. At last, there was a sky of clear mauve, and out of its warm light the great evening star shone radiant above the lake."—*Florence A. Merriam* in *A Sunset on Great Salt Lake.*

With a delicacy of choice and artistic touch, the writer has here used her adjectives, blending them with the verbs and other elements to bring out the picture.

In teaching the adjective the aim should be to train the pupil to use choice adjectives sparingly, yet skillfully. There is a common tendency among amateur writers and speakers in describing to effervesce in adjectives. "It was a grand, wonderful, magnificent, view"—is typical of their gaudy but ineffective sentences. The cure for such a fault is not teaching facts about adjectives, but cultivating appreciation for choice and fitting words.

Another essential to be emphasized in teaching the adjective concerns the definitive, or limiting, adjective. The chief difficulty met in using this class of modifiers is found in choosing the right forms. **This, that, these,**

those; each, every, a, an, and **the,** are among the principal trouble-makers here. An accurate use of these and other limiting adjectives makes for sentence clearness.

Adverbs may be used helpfully at times; but they should not be over-used. When the verb can be made to carry the effect of both adverb and verb, and do it better, the adverb may be omitted to advantage. There is a tendency to-day to vitalize speech by the use of such vigorous verbs.

From the use viewpoint, another point in connection with the adverb calls for attention and drill. **The "ly" forms should be chosen when the sense demands an adverb.** A common tendency of this hurry age is to drop all such endings, especially in expressions like, **"Run quick; Work rapid; Step quiet."*** We Americans are inclined to be too abrupt in our speech. A little care in using adverbial forms correctly would help somewhat in overcoming this fault.

The conjunction is the chief connecting element. There are not many conjunctions, but their use is of fundamental importance. The logic of the sentence depends largely on the way its parts are tied together. By proper use of connectives, the reader or hearer is enabled to keep clearly in mind the varying turns in the trail of thought. Conjunctions may be called the guide-posts of language.

Choice and place are the essentials to be kept in mind in teaching these connectives. The tendency to over-use **and,** the misuse of **like** for **as** or **as if, without** for **unless,** are some of the commonest errors.

* **Drive slow** seems to have won its way into accepted usage.

Many persons say, I feel **as though** it is going to storm. The inaccuracy of this conjunction is revealed by expanding the sentence thus: I feel as I would feel **though** it is going to storm. This clearly is not the meaning intended. It is rather expressed by the conjunction **as if.**

The right choice of conjunctions is dependent mainly on clear thinking. The "and" habit, as already suggested, may be permanently cured only as the pupil is led to sense the difference in thought values within the sentence. This done, he will cease using the coördinate conjunction **and** to join parts of the sentence of unequal rank. The pupil, trained likewise to recognize the real meaning and effect of **but, or, since, for, unless, nor, as,** and other common connectives, is more likely to use them accurately.

Proper placing of correlatives is also directly dependent on clear thinking. The main use of these pairs of connectives, **not only—but; both—and; neither—nor; either—or; when—then;** and others less commonly used, is to keep the sentence properly balanced. For example: A man may serve his country well, **not only** on the field of battle, **but** in the fields of production. The pupil should be trained to weigh his sentence before he expresses it, and usually to place the members of the correlative before like parts of speech. For illustration: He was used **both** to poverty **and** to hard work, is clearer and better than, He was **both** used to poverty **and** hard work.

The preposition is one of the most important parts of speech. Inaccuracy in the use of it often causes

much trouble. In a recent survey made of the compositions of pupils in ten different states, nearly one-sixth of the errors found were due to a mischoice of prepositions.

Prepositions are not separate elements in sentence building. This part of speech is used always in a word group—the prepositional phrase, which, taken as a unit, is generally a modifier; as, We struggled **up the rocky trail,** the scout **with his rifle** leading the way. Sometimes, though not often, the prepositional phrase is used substantively; as, "Over there" is an expression endeared to American hearts.

Clearness and exactness of expression calls for accuracy of choice among these little relation words. The pupil should be trained to feel the varying changes in meaning the preposition throws over the sentence. A slight change in these words may produce an important difference in the sense.

For illustration: A teacher should laugh **with,** not **at** her pupils. The man may be accused **of** a theft **by** the policeman. I agree **with** the mayor that the people should not agree **to** that proposition. She said she would part **with** everything she owned but she would never part **from** her mother.

Observe, too, the nice distinction implied in the prepositions which Lincoln uses in this famous sentence: "We here highly resolve . . . that government **of** the people, **by** the people, and **for** the people, shall not perish from the earth."

Ability to use these common little words effectively does not spring from copying prepositions and diagram-

ing phrases. It results rather from making the child sense the inner meaning of the preposition. This accomplished, practice will assure the correct use.

The independent element, grammatically speaking, plays no part in sentence building. Interjections, and other similar expressions, are not grammatically connected with the sentence. These elements do have a thought or emotional influence, however, over the sentence as a whole. Note, for example, the effect of the independent expressions used in each of the following sentences:

Surely, you would not do that!
Indeed! I thought you were his brother.
Bah! He'd never consent to that plan.

The interjection, to be most effectively used, must be used sparingly. This is about the only practical suggestion that needs to be impressed on the pupils. Occasionally, it may help in making the sentence more impressive, but artistic writers use it with care. They usually make their language vivid and forceful by an effective use of the other parts of speech.

The essential thing to be kept in mind is this: All of the various parts of speech should be vitalized by being taught from the use viewpoint. Pupils should be trained to think of these useful sentence elements in connection with daily life language.

QUESTIONS

1. What is the main value to come from a study of the parts of speech?
2. How may drills in the correct use of the parts of speech be made most useful to the pupils?

3. Summarize in brief form the main points, or general rules of practical use, to be learned in regard to each of the following parts of speech: (a) Nouns. (b) Pronouns. (c) Adjectives. (d) Adverbs.

4. Why is a clear knowledge of the verb of such vital value in language training?

5. Illustrate clearly how accuracy in language is very often dependent on a nice use of prepositions and conjunctions.

6. Why should interjections be used but sparingly?

EXERCISES

1. Have a round table discussion of this assertion: The verb is the life-giving element in the sentence. Be ready with illustrations to use in proof of points you may wish to make in the discussion.

2. According to your observation, what rules governing the use of parts of speech are most frequently violated? Give instances to prove what you say, and join with your associates in a discussion of the point.

3. Make a collection of ten of the most effective advertisements you know. Study each to determine what elements of speech give it such effectiveness. Or make a similar study of the vivid explanations on the moving picture film. What parts of speech are most used to help make the story move clearly and rapidly?

REDUCING INFLECTIONS TO THEIR LOWEST TERMS

English is a language of comparatively few and simple inflections. As ordinarily taught, however, it would seem to be as complex as Latin. The common tendency among teachers to drag the forms of the dead past down into the living present, is nowhere more strikingly shown than in their dealing with this phase of grammar.

Economy of time and effectiveness of effort both call for the facing of inflections from a practical viewpoint. What are the essentials here? What rules of syntax governing the choice of these various forms are still vital? An answer to these questions will help greatly in cancelling the non-essentials and reducing inflections to their lowest terms.

The following table shows at a glance the inflections of various parts of speech in English:

Adverb	comparison				
Adjective	comparison	number			
Noun	gender	number	case		
Pronoun	gender	number	case	person	
Verb	voice	number	tense	person	mood

Five parts of speech are inflected—the first for one thing; the second for two; the third for three; the fourth for four; and the fifth for five. This nutshell presentation of the subject makes a helpful introduction. It is easy to get and hard to forget.

A grouping of the various inflections as here given is also helpful. Observe that two parts of speech are inflected for comparison; four for number; two for gender; two for case; two for person. Since the rules governing these inflections are essentially the same for any part of speech thus inflected, the difficulties may be reduced by considering any given inflection in its relation to the different parts of speech affected by it.

In teaching these various inflections, the work may be simplified by dealing with the inflection itself rather than with each part of speech separately. A change in number, for example, may affect four different elements in the sentence: as,

1. **That hat costs** more than it is worth.
2. **Those hats cost more** than they are worth.

The pupil, trained to feel the general influence of an inflection over the sentence, is more likely to speak correctly than if he is taught inflections merely as a matter of facts and rules.

A still further focusing of the study effort may be made by giving emphatic attention to the trouble spots. What are they? Briefly said, **number, tense,** and **case.** This triangle of trouble makers causes about three-fourths of the blunders in speech.

So far as **mode** is concerned, few mistakes can be made. The only remnant of change affecting everyday speech is found in this type sentence. **I wish I were,** or, **If I were.** People generally persist in using **was** wrongly here.

Personal endings, except in the sacred forms of the verb, as in **hast, wast,** for example, have all but disappeared.

In the verb **to be** we have **am, art, is;** but there is almost no possibility of making an error in person when using these forms unless it would be in this sentence: It is I who **am** to blame. Some persons might choose **is** or **are** here.

Gender is mainly a matter of learning to spell correctly a few noun forms. Number also, and case as applied to the noun, are chiefly spelling lessons.

Voice has an important use, as already pointed out, in shifting the emphasis in the sentence from the actor to the receiver of the act. The chief practical difficulty met here is in the misuse of the past tense for the past participle in changing to the passive voice. Pupils are likely to say, The window **was broke,** rather than to use the proper form, **was broken.** The rule is simple enough; it can be expressed almost mathematically: **Be** plus the **past participle** equals the passive verb. Not the learning of this rule, however, but rather the tongue and ear drill to fix the passive forms is of prime importance. Let the pupil, through games and drills, be trained unfailingly to say **was broken; was laid; has been taken; has been eaten; to be written; to be chosen; being chosen; being broken,** and like forms. Thus drilled, he will soon come to use the passive verb correctly.

Comparison is not difficult to understand but its application gives some trouble. In dealing with this inflection, two essentials should be mastered: 1. **Choosing right forms for comparison.** 2. **Making the comparison clear. The forms ending in "er" and "est," and those preceded by "more" and "most" are most troublesome.** Accuracy here depends more on euphony

than on rules. The pupil, whose ear has been rightly trained, is likely to be shocked at hearing such expressions as "beautifulest," "awkwarder," and other similar blunders in sound. Ear-training deserves greater attention than it generally receives, not only in connection with comparison, but with other phases of language. Our speech would sound better and be freer from errors if pupils were trained to listen to the music of words, and to make their sentences euphonious.

Keeping comparisons clear is another difficult problem. The common fault in making comparisons is to say things not intended to be said. For illustrations:

1. Washington was more famous than all of his generals. (Here Washington is compared with all of his generals taken together.)

2. The girl is the best of her classmates. (In this sentence the girl is spoken of as if she were one of her own classmates.)

To overcome such faults as these, the pupil must be trained to think the comparison clearly before expressing it. "What do I wish to bring out?" "Does my comparison say what I intended it to say?" are good guiding questions on this point.

Number is one of the chief trouble makers among the inflections. The rule of agreement, which applies principally to this inflection, finds application in almost every sentence. The pupil, therefore, must be trained to be on the alert to prevent mistakes in number. The following are twelve type sentences that need careful watching:

1. You were going. (You is always used with the plural verb.)

2. He doesn't know it. (Watch contractions.)
3. Each had his hat. (**Each** and **every** are singular.)
4. The scissors were lost. (Plural form singular in meaning.)
5. The audience was stirred. (Collective nouns.)
6. "Helen's Babies" is a funny story. (Titles are always singular.)
7. The music of birds was thrilling. (Subject followed by phrase.)
8. Tom or Harry is to blame. (Compound subject connected by **or**.)
9. Mary and Susan are sisters. (Compound subject connected by **and**.)
10. There are three boats on the lake. (Sentences beginning with **there**.)
11. The memoranda were lost. (Foreign plurals.)
12. Twelve dollars was too much. (Subject giving amounts.)

Probably ninety per cent of the errors made in number occur in sentences of the types given here. Positive drill on usable sentences is the best cure for such errors.

The other mistakes made in number are chiefly mistakes in spelling singular and plural forms. Many children confuse the plural and the genitive (possessive) forms, using the apostrophe in making the plural; as, **ladie's, horse's** for ladies, horses.

Thorough drill in spelling isolated words is one way of overcoming this fault, but it is not the best way. The pupil should be drilled on genitive forms used with their context. Dictation exercises similar to the following should be used:

John's hat is on the floor.
We saw Mary's cat in the kitchen.
Tom's sled is broken.
Ned's bat was lost.

The ladies' hats are stylish.
The children's coats are warm.
The soldiers' guns were taken.

In drilling on singular and plural forms, much time has been wasted on words that are almost never needed. How often, for illustration, will the ordinary person have occasion to spell either the singular or plural of the following words: Trousseau, appendixes, indices, tableaux, colloquy, tyro, salvo, antithesis, ignes fatui, seraphim, billet-doux, innuendo, octavo, literati, woman-singer, talisman, Mussulman.

For most persons, the struggle to learn to spell the singular and plural of these and a host of other similar forms, is a distressful memory. And that kind of educational atrocity is still being perpetrated in many parts of our country by grammarians and unthinking teachers. A concerted effort should be made to eliminate all useless number forms and to simplify the spelling of needed words. Two practical suggestions are offered for consideration:

1. Train the pupils to use the English instead of the foreign plurals where a choice is permitted; as, **beaus, tableaus, vertebras, formulas.**

2. Why not follow the suggestion of the reformers and spell the plurals of all nouns ending in "o" regularly; as, **mottos, buffalos, solos?**

These and other necessary steps would help greatly in reducing the difficulties in number.

Case is another inflection that has been made unnecessarily difficult. Reduced to its lowest terms, this inflection presents only these few essentials to be mastered:

1. Spelling the genitive forms of plural and singular nouns.

2. Learning the nominative and accusative forms and uses of the pronoun.

3. Mastering type sentences that give trouble.

The rules governing the formation of genitive plural and singular forms of the noun are simple. Their application depends mainly on training the pupil to thoughtfulness in using these forms to avoid confounding them with forms indicating only singular and plural number.

There are only seven pronouns that have both nominative and accusative forms as follows:

I	me	we	us
he	him	they	them
she	her	who	whom
		thou	thee

As to the uses, the following are the only ones wherein misuse of these case forms is likely to occur in daily speech:

1. Subject; 2. Direct object; 3. Object of a preposition; 4. Predicative nominative; 5. In apposition; 6. Subject of a gerund.

The following five sentences are typical of those wherein nearly all of the mistakes in case are made:

1. It is I, he, she, they. (Predicate nominative.)

2. We girls are going. They spoke to us girls. (In apposition.)

3. John and I did it. Between you and me. (Compound elements.)

4. He is no better than I. (Elliptical sentence.)

5. Whom did you see, call, tell, ask? (Direct object.)

Three-fourths or more of the errors in case are made

in sentences of these five kinds. Less frequently the following three type sentences give trouble:

1. His being there made no difference. (Subject of gerund.)
2. He is a boy who, I think, will do the work well. (Subject of verb will do.)
3. They having arrived, the settlers felt safe. (Nominative absolute.)

Case is governed by use. The office to be performed determines whether the nominative, accusative or genitive form shall be chosen. Pupils trained in making a quick mental analysis of sentence structure have little difficulty in justifying their choice of forms here. Added to this, however, they should be drilled in saying and in hearing correctly the sentences of the types just given in order that correct usage in case may become second nature to them.

Tense is one of the chief trouble makers among the inflections. The choice of verb forms, the right use of auxiliaries (**can, may, will, shall,** and others); the harmony of tenses—are all involved here. Much of the trouble, however, can be avoided by concentrating the effort on the places where error is most likely to occur.

Investigation reveals the fact that about twenty-five per cent of the mistakes made in violation of the rules of grammar come because of a wrong choice between the past and the past participial forms of the verb. As in the following: I **seen** it; I **done** it; He **has went** home; It is **broke.**

About fifty irregular verbs are the trouble makers here. Among these, **see, do, go** and **come** seem to be the chief offenders. The others grouped according to

their similarity in forming their parts, which, by the way, is a most helpful way of dealing with them in drill work, are as follows:

1. Begin, drink, ring, run, shrink, sing, sink, spring, swim.
2. Blow, draw, fly, grow, know, throw.
3. Beat, bite, break, choose, drive, eat, fall, forget, give, hide, ride, rise, steal, take, weave, write.
4. Bear, swear, tear, wear.

Besides these there are a few other verb forms for which wrong forms are sometimes used; as, bring, burst, catch, climb, drag.

The mastery of these forms is largely a matter of ear and tongue training through drill on the principal parts rightly used. Language games are of value here, especially with little folk.

The mastery of the auxiliary verbs "shall" and "will," "can" and "may," "ought," "should" and "would," is also mainly a matter of positive training. Pupils may learn the rules of syntax governing these forms over and over again. Unless their proper use is made a matter of habit, until the pupil is so trained as to feel uncomfortable when the wrong forms are used, he cannot become a master of correct usage.

All of the foregoing discussion revolves around the question, "What is the use?" To find the forms that are still active in our common speech, to discover the trouble makers among them, to teach the necessary rules governing correct usage, and to make these rules sure by application, is to reduce inflections to their lowest terms.

QUESTIONS

1. Show by illustration the difference between English and Latin or some other highly inflected language.
2. What inflections have almost disappeared from our everyday speech?
3. What four inflections cause most difficulty in choosing correct forms?
4. To what extent is the mastering of inflections merely learning how to spell?
5. Give a practical suggestion that would be of positive help in reducing spelling or other difficulties without loss in efficiency.
6. Suggest a practical drill on the correct case forms of pronouns; on the principal parts of the most troublesome irregular verbs.

EXERCISES

1. Have a round table discussion of this question: What are the trouble-making type sentences in comparison? In case? In number? In tense? In the use of "shall" and "will"? Suggest a good exercise for overcoming any one of these type faults.
2. Create a language game that might be used in an elementary grade for training the tongue to overcome some type mistake made in violation of some common rule governing the use of inflections. Join with your group in playing the games created by members of the class.
3. Make a list of the advantages of using correct language as you gather them from merchants, doctors, lawyers, or newspaper men and women of your community.

VII

GAINING A COMMAND OF WORDS

Ability to use the choice, the happy expression is an invaluable acquisition. It paves the way for success along every path of life.

BUILDING THE LIVE VOCABULARY

A live vocabulary is one that is electric in its response to the call of thought. It is not a mob of words, but an army. It may be commanded; it is made up of choice expressions that are both alive and alert to spring to the firing line of language whenever need demands.

In language training nothing is more important than helping the learner to gain such a command of words. To be most effective in conversation, in social affairs, in business, or in public address, one must have ability to use with fluency the fitting expression. The vocabulary must be not only rich but ready, if one is to meet with grace and skill the varying daily life needs for speech.

The following conversation which took place recently between a teacher of English and a young man who represented a life insurance company, shows clearly the importance of a good vocabulary:

"Our manager," the young man began, "is anxious to see you."

"He wishes to have me take out a larger policy, I presume."

"No; he wants to talk to you about taking some English work."

"That interests me. What is his object?"

"Well, frankly speaking, he has found that he needs a better command of words in order to increase his business."

"You do not mean that his lack of words is making him lose money?"

"Certainly. Don't you realize that there is a dollar value in good language?"

"I had not thought of it in just that way."

"Well, there is. Suppose, for instance, a man gives me five, ten, fifteen minutes, or an hour of his time. If I fail to convince him of the worth of my proposition, if I do not succeed in landing the business, the other fellow who can talk more convincingly gets it, that's all. A command of the right words has a good deal to do with making a deal. Don't you believe it?"

"Yes, I see your point. I'm wondering just how I might help your manager to gain such a command of words."

"It won't come merely from books; I've tried that," responded the young representative. "A fellow wants a good working vocabulary. To get it, I suppose, he has to go after it. It means study and practice in using words that are alive."

The young man was right. **A live usable vocabulary can be acquired best through well directed practice in the use of choice, living language.** One should keep training one's self to find and to use with discrimination the words that make up the speech of to-day. By this means the desire for well-chosen words may be cultivated and the habit of using them fixed.

Command of an effective vocabulary cannot be gained from books alone. The habit of reading good books is indirectly very helpful, it is true; but the learner must go further. The reading vocabulary is likely to be

"bookish;" and, though rich, is not usually ready. It will not leap to the tongue as fast as thought calls for it.

Thousands of people can read with facility. When they try to speak, however, their language is halting. Not lack of words, but lack of ability to command words, is the main cause of their language embarrassment.

Both the reading and the speaking vocabulary are needed. The two may well be developed together in all studies. Indeed, to gain a mastery of any subject the pupil must learn not only to read but to use in his discussion the vocabulary through which that subject is best expressed. To study successfully any line of work, therefore, one must of necessity gain a reading and a speaking knowledge of the special words that belong to that subject. School work is largely a process of working with words.

Vocabulary building for the general purposes of life is of particular concern to reading, spelling, and language. A special aim of reading is to enrich the reading vocabulary. Spelling deals directly with giving the learner a mastery of the written word. Language work should have as a central purpose also the helping of the pupil to acquire an effective speaking vocabulary.

This training to give pupils a choice speaking vocabulary has been generally neglected. A great deal of attention has rightly been given to reading and to spelling; but the well-directed practice necessary to cultivating skill in the use of the spoken word has been largely crowded out of the curriculum, often by far less essential work.

The language lesson constantly offers excellent oppor-

tunities for working with the living word. Pupils, stimulated to express themselves on subjects close to their lives, will always have need for choice expressions. To direct them in their search for these is at once to stimulate them to strive for the right words and to give them practice in using right words.

The following lesson, sketched from schoolroom practice, shows clearly how the language lesson lends itself to live vocabulary building. The teacher of a certain grade had led her pupils to tell of their coasting, when one boy, forgetting himself, said excitedly:

"Oh, it was fun! We jumped on our sleds and just went ripping down the hill." The class laughed. A bit of playground slang had slipped into the schoolroom.

"That was a swift ride, Will, a very swift ride," said the teacher. "Who can make it just as swift and use a different expression?"

The pupils leaped with interest to the problem. The sled **whizzed, tore, raced, flew, shot** down the hill. A dozen or more effective words to express the thought were found. The pupils chose the one they liked best. Then the teacher, to touch up the interest further, gave this quotation from *Evangeline*, to show how Longfellow had expressed a similar picture:

"Oft on sledges in winter, swift as the swoop of an eagle,
Down the hillside bounding, they glided away o'er the meadow."

But one little fellow dared to question even the poet's use of the word **bounding,** and would not be satisfied until another suggested, "May be they had bumps on the track."

In this illustration is to be found the essence of the true message of vocabulary building.

Young folks are naturally expressive. Every day brings them thoughts and feelings which they are constantly attempting to convey to others. What they need most is a little encouragement and tactful guidance in finding the right words.

The hunt for the fitting word may become, as just illustrated, a lively language game. Pupils enjoy solving these language problems. Vocabulary building exercises may be made a most attractive part of the course.

Among the general exercises through which this work may be practically presented, the following have proved most successful: 1. Blank-filling; 2. Language probblems; 3. Finding the author's words; 4. Creative verse work. The two last named will be dealt with rather fully in succeeding chapters. **Blank-filling** and **language problems** will receive definite attention here. How they offer good daily lesson work is illustrated in the following reports of recitations:

"This surely is a wintry day," said a fourth grade teacher as the children, after a romping recess in the biting wind, had begun to settle to their lessons again; "just look at that snow."

The pupils turned to watch for a moment the wild whirl of the snowflakes outside.

"What word tells best how the snow is coming down?" asked the teacher.

"It's falling," exclaimed one of the irrepressibles.

"Certainly, Tom, snow usually falls; but can't you find a word that brings a clearer picture than falling?"

"Fluttering," suggested a girl. "Whirling," "sifting," "drifting," "driving," came other replies.

Interest in the language problem began to grow.

"Those expressions are more picturesque," continued the teacher. "Now try to find a word to describe the wind that is driving the snow."

"It is a very cold wind," suggested one.

"Yes, Hazel, but give us a word that makes us feel the coldness."

"Freezing," ventured the pupil. "Nipping," "sharp," "keen," "cutting," "biting," were other suggestions.

"Why are these words more effective than 'cold' to describe this wind?"

"They make us shiver," said one pupil.

"Indeed they do," responded the teacher; "I wonder now whether we can not make a word picture of this wintry day that would cause others to see and feel it as we do. Suppose you try. As I write this little sketch of the day on the board, will you find vivid words to fill the blanks? See that they suggest truly the spirit of this wintry morning."

As the paper was being passed the following was written on the board quickly:

King Winter rules the world to-day. The snow is..... down, spreading a.....blanket over the earth. The..... winds are.....round the houses and through the trees.

Most of the birds have flown south; or else they are hiding in some.....place to keep away from Jack Frost. The squirrels and mice and rabbits have.....themselves in some.....nest to sleep.

Only the snowbirds and the children seem to like King Winter. They do not mind so much his.....winds, and.....

snowflakes. They give the children.....cheeks and bright eyes. Sometimes, of course, old Jack Frost.....their fingers and.....their toes; but what do they care? It is fun to.....in the snow, to.....down the hills, to .....on the ice.

The pupils thus stimulated and guided, attacked the exercise with zest, choosing and testing out various words to complete and vitalize the composition. This purposeful seat work done, various papers were read and put to the general test of class opinion. The natural result of the exercise was to increase the vocabularies of all who took part; but better than this was the interest stimulated in finding the effective word.

Vocabulary building exercises, to bring the richest returns, must be both constructive and close to life. Add to these qualities, as was done in the lesson just sketched, the spirit of the language game, and the exercises become a challenge to the pupil's interest.

Various kinds of positive lessons to enrich and inspirit the vocabulary may be rather easily created. The blank-filling exercise can be readily adapted to blend with the expression work in all of the grades. Sentences and paragraphs on hundreds of varying topics may be given with the distinctive words omitted, and the pupils set to the work of finding the fitting expression. For example:

The horse.....down the street. We heard the..... fire bell. The automobile.....the corner.

It was a.....spring day. The birds.....in the trees,.....out their hearts in.....music. A..... breeze.....the blossoms, shaking down their..... petals and.....perfume everywhere.

These blank-filling exercises should come, of course, as an outgrowth of the pupil's oral and written work. Their purpose is directly to minister to his need for choice, effective words.

With younger children it will be necessary to govern the exercise with a guiding list of words from which they may make selections. This helps to overcome the spelling difficulty and to keep them from choosing senseless expressions. In the high school, however, the pupil should be left largely to his own resources to find the right word.

The language problem is illustrated in the question, "What word suggests how the snow is coming down?" It is essentially different from the blank-filling exercises only in form. In one sense all the lessons in vocabulary work give language problems to solve. Variety, however, in the way of presenting the work adds spice to the exercise.

The following questions are suggestive of a multitude of language problems that may be given in connection with composition lessons to stimulate a search for the apt word:

What expression best suggests the song of the meadow lark? The music of the mountain stream? The call of the coyote? The voice of the thunder? The noise of a train?

Another variation of the language problem is to be found in the exercise of changing words to produce different effects.

By using other words for those in black type, change the picture suggested by the following sentences:

The man strolled down the street. (Trudged, hurried, limped, and other words will be chosen.)

The dog had a savage bark. (Friendly, snappish, gruff, and other picturesque expressions may be used here.)

A wild wind whistled through the naked trees. (A gentle wind sighed through the naked trees, or some other sentence will be made.)

A wide variety of words may be called forth by such exercises as these. More important still is the training they give in word discrimination, without which effectiveness of speech is impossible.

QUESTIONS

1. When may one be said to have a command of a choice "live vocabulary"?
2. Give two reasons why the building of such a vocabulary in themselves and in their pupils is of vital concern to every teacher.
3. Why is the commendable practice of reading choice books in itself not sufficient to give one an effective working vocabulary?
4. Show how every lesson rightly taught becomes indirectly an exercise in vocabulary building.
5. Illustrate how the language lesson especially offers opportunities to bring under better control the common speech used outside the school room.

EXERCISES

1. Have an exchange of personal experiences suggested by this topic: The best method I have found of enriching my speaking vocabulary.
2. Have a round table discussion of these questions: (a) What special, direct help in vocabulary building can best be given the pupil in reading, spelling, and language? (b) In what general way may such other subjects as history, geography, mathematics, and science be of help?
3. Make a list of special vocabulary building exercises which

might be based on the out-of-school interests of the pupil, such as games and athletics, boy scout work, girl scout work, work at home, on the farm, or in the city.

THE SLANG PROBLEM

The slang problem is closely connected with vocabulary building. Slang itself is one of the main sources of language growth. Through the use of slang many useful expressions are constantly being coined to enrich our common tongue. The slang habit, however, will steal away the riches from the speech of any individual who becomes addicted to it. How to be fair with slang, therefore, while fighting the slang habit, is the main question to be faced in dealing with this subject.

The extremist would solve this troublesome problem by **forbidding the use of slang** altogether. His protest, however, against this "coarse and vulgar speech" seems to have had much the same effect on waves of slang that have swept over our country, as had the command of King Canute when, as legend tells us, he planted his scepter in the sand and commanded the tide to stop.

The schools, seeing the futility of fighting the slang habit simply by prohibiting slang, have gone to another extreme. For the most part they are doing little or nothing about it. Teachers and texts generally evade the issue. Instead of exercising a firm guiding influence to keep pupils from becoming habituated in the use of slang, schools are too often fertile fields for the cultivation of the habit. One of the chief marks of our American students is coming to be a flippant and daring, not to say slovenly, use of language.

What can be done effectively to prevent or to overcome the fault? By what practical plan can teachers most successfully stimulate such a pride in language as will make pupils strive constantly to keep their speech clean?

A better understanding of the whole slang question is the first essential. Slang has been abused and ignored, but not generally understood. Before any intelligent campaign can be carried on, looking towards the clearing of our speech of whatever evils come from the use of this more or less lawless language, a careful study of the problem must be made.

Slang is not the unmitigated evil it has been pictured by the purist. So far as language in general is concerned, it is rather an asset than a liability. The words and idioms that give strength and individuality to our speech have sprung largely from slang sources.

"All language," Lowell once said, "is 'slanguage'." By this witticism he meant that every expression in any language must at some time or another have been outside the circle of select usage. All of the words and idioms that make up any vernacular must win their way first into popular favor, then into literary approval, before they attain a sure standing in any speech.

Language is created out of the mouths of the common folk. Certainly most of the hard-working words and common counters of speech have sprung from this humble origin. Out of necessity they are created to meet real needs. If they give good service they persist in speech. Among the hundreds of expressions to be cited from our tongue in proof of the point are these:

a good deal, handy, take care of, had better, well-to-do, dodge, foggy, baggage, hurry, rush, quick, dance, jump, sneeze, pinch, sting, shuffle. Observe that these expressions still smack of their slang origin. The list might easily be extended into the thousands.

Slang is fairly conceived when it is thought of as language in the making. Every living language contains some of this more or less lawless speech. As any language grows it must take on new forms to meet new needs or to replace expressions that naturally fall into disuse. Most slang is short lived, of course. Many expressions, however, pass successfully the service test and are accepted. It is a case of "the survival of the fittest" here as elsewhere.

This language coinage is constantly going on. Every day brings new forms into our speech to be tested and accepted, or rejected. Even now a host of such expressions, created during the World War, are seeking admission into the society of good usage. For illustration, **over the top, carry on, slacker.** There can be no doubt that these expressions have given valiant service; whether they will be permanent in our speech time alone can tell. It is certain, however, that these expressions with many others that have been created to meet the emergencies of the great struggle will always remain to remind us of it.

New words are markers of progress. Every event in history worth chronicling is likely to bring new expressions with which it may be characterized. Every invention carries with it new words. Thus with the automobile came **garage, chauffeur, carburetor, differential,**

self-starter, and a great many other terms. With the creation of the aeroplane, the telephone, the moving picture, the phonograph, and other inventions, were created new language forms many of which, like **self-starter, airship, movie, talking machine,** are slang. It would be difficult to do without such words nevertheless, and some of them will be finally sanctioned even by the purist.

There is no cause for alarm over the prevalence of slang in our American language. It is simply a sign that our speech is alive and growing rapidly. The faster the progress of a nation the more language currency must be coined to meet the increasing need for exchange of thought and experiences. An increase of slang indicates, therefore, not retrogression, but progression in the common speech.

The fact that slang has its uses is no excuse, however, for any person to become a slave to slang. If he does so he simply debases his personal language. To surrender to slang is to weaken and cheapen the individual vocabulary.

Not slang, however, but the slang habit is the thing to be fought. The learner should be taken into our confidence on this point. A better understanding by the pupil of the uses and abuses of slang would help greatly in holding him from becoming a slang spendthrift. He should be made to feel that though slang is helpful as a means of increasing our general stock of useful words, the slang habit is a robber.

The danger of inviting these language tramps into our language is that they will drive out the legitimate words

and turn the tongue to lawlessness. The old Arabian fable of the camel, which, desiring to warm its nose, was allowed to put it into the tent, and then gradually crowded the indulgent driver out into the cold, is plainly applicable here. Slang, given but half a chance, may displace its betters.

Another point that should be made plain to the pupil is this: **The slang-filled vocabulary, though showy and smart, is cheap and ineffective.** It evidences a lazy lack of choice words. Those given to the over-use of slang generally have, after all, only a few expressions to cover a multitude of ideas. With them, for example, every unusual thing may be **swell**; as, "a **swell** party," "a **swell** automobile," "a **swell** dress," "a **swell** dish of ice cream," "a **swell** day."

They change their expressions too with every change in word fashion. **Swell** may suddenly be dropped for **classy**; **classy** for **nifty**; **nifty** for **spiffy.** A dollar will one day be **a cartwheel,** at another time it will be **a washer**; then presto! it becomes **a bone, a buck, a berry,** or **a bean.**

A study of slang shows that it usually follows along certain lines, giving new expressions for the same general ideas. Some of these varying creations are clean and clever; others are silly or slovenly. The pupil should be trained to discriminate between the coarse and slovenly and the clean and clever, even in slang. The learner should be led away from the slums of speech, and kept, as far as possible, in the realm of choice language.

If this desirable result is to be achieved, however, the pupil must be given a vocabulary that is not only choice,

but alive. **Young folk will use vigorous, sparkling expressions.** If these are not given them from approved sources, they are likely to leap to daring speech of shop and street as an outlet for their spirited thoughts and feelings.

Teachers and texts have usually been unfair with the pupil on this point. Instead of helping to find choice, usable words, they have attempted to force on him a bookish vocabulary. The pupil does not often protest outwardly against the teacher's suggestions. An instance of this kind occurred recently in a sixth grade class. The pupils had been asked to write of some vacation experience. One girl chose as her subject "A Day in the Mountains."

In telling of the experience she related in detail how the family had risen early, prepared their picnic, climbed into a buggy and driven up a long canyon to an inviting spot among the pines. Here they made camp.

"We children spent the rest of the morning," she continued, "running after chipmunks and gathering flowers. Then we ate lunch and after that we climbed way up the steep hills. About sundown we started back to town. It took us until nearly midnight to reach home, and when we got there we were 'all in'."

Glancing over the composition, the teacher asked, "What about the last remark, Henrietta?"

"I know it's slang," she said, with a twinkle in her eye.

"Can't you find another expression to take its place?"

She shook her head.

"How would 'tired out' do?"

" 'Tired out' might be all right," she returned defensively, "but we were 'all in'. "

The right attitude in dealing with the problem was clearly suggested in the classroom incident given on page 232. When the pupil there let slip a bit of slang, the teacher tactfully turned the class to the finding of a better expression that would send the sled down the hill just as swiftly. A merry search for the choice, the fitting word, was the result.

Not prohibition but substitution is always the most effective cure for the slang habit. Whether we have any right to forbid the use of a slang expression unless we can suggest another that is not only approved but just as alive to take its place, is an open question. Certain it is, however, that if such expressions can be given, the pupils will generally be eager enough to accept the substitute and to work with the teacher for the enrichment of their own speech.

A study of the language of effective writers offers excellent stimulus here. How do they vitalize their speech without resorting to slang? The answer may readily be found by observing carefully their choice of words.

It will be discovered that they generally vitalize their language in either of two ways: 1. They put the splendid idioms of our speech to effective use; 2. They turn old words to new and unusual service.

Observe for example the following sentences chosen from successful writings:

"We had a burning desire from the beginning to see a pony rider, but somehow or other all that passed us managed to streak by in the night."—*Mark Twain.*

"Outside his prison lay a stretch of **blinding blue** water which ended in a line of breakers and a **yellow coast** with **ragged palms.**" —*Richard Harding Davis.*

"The elephant **tucked** the brown baby **comfortably** between his forefeet that could have **knocked into toothpicks** all Chebin's hut, and waited for his food."—*Rudyard Kipling.*

"All that afternoon he sat in the stall **wrapped** in the most **perfect** happiness, **waving his long thin fingers** in time to the music, while his **gently smiling face** and his **languid dreamy eyes** were as unlike those of Holmes, the **sleuth-hound,** Holmes, the **keen-witted, ready-handed** criminal agent, as it was possible to conceive."—*A. Conan Doyle.*

"Jimmy **collared** a boy that was loafing on the steps of the bank as if he were one of the stockholders, and began to question him about the town, **feeding him dimes** at intervals."—*O. Henry.*

"Suddenly Angelica became conscious that several thousand people were staring at her with looks of wonder and amusement. Caroline **clutched her arm** and **dragged her away** from the rail. The girl colored and **shook herself free.**"—*David Gray.*

Careful observation of the newspapers and magazines will reinforce respect for choice language. Much slang may be found in the pages of this current literature, it is true; but there is far less of it than is commonly thought. The news stories and magazine articles are on the whole not only remarkably free from lawless speech; but they are constantly bringing to us some of the finest examples of a virile use of pure language.

"The business of the news writer is to vivify facts," said a correspondent of the Associated Press recently. "He must interpret the swiftly moving events of the world in such a way as to attract and hold the attention of the many-minded public. In the doing of it he is likely to test language to the utmost."

This stretch and strain of speech has its beneficial results. It gives language such an exercise as promotes a healthy growth. Instead of berating our correspondents for breaking over the bounds of approved usage, as we commonly do, we had better give them more appreciation for the excellent services they are giving in vitalizing and enriching our language.

Pupils should be trained to read this living literature with discrimination. An occasional democratic recitation to which each contributes a brief clipping illustrative of excellently written news stories, editorials, or other articles would be helpful in stimulating the young learner to watch for the best in his daily reading. Practice in the writing of such articles would prove even more beneficial in stimulating proper pride and care in his own speech.

The mere study of life-giving language either in classic or current literature is not sufficient. The slang habit can hardly be overcome unless pupils are given well directed training in choosing and using the fitting word to express their own thought and feeling. Inviting exercises that help them to gain a choice working vocabulary should be constantly given them.

QUESTIONS

1. What are the chief sources of slang? Account for its prevalent use in our common speech.

2. Show how slang, though constantly enriching the common language, may yet rob one's tongue of its riches.

3. Discuss this assertion: "Substitution, not prohibition, is the best cure for the slang habit."

4. How can teachers be fair with slang while fighting the slang habit in themselves and in their pupils?

5. In what ways can teachers do the best individual work and team work to create a proper pride in the use of choice language?

EXERCISES

Join with your associates, or lead your pupils, in making a survey of the slang used in the community by following these directions:

1. Listen closely to the speech of the school room, the street, the home, and other places, making note of every slang expression heard and marking the number of times it is used.

2. Tabulate the results, grouping expressions alike in meaning together; as, **beat it, skidoo, twenty-three.**

3. Have an open discussion of the results with two points in view: (a) What are the main trouble makers? (b) By what positive exercises can they best be overcome?

WORD ACCURACY

"A word fitly chosen is like apples of gold in pictures of silver," runs the proverb. Certain it is that the happily selected expression is always in place. Skill to make a nice distinction in words, to use language that is clear and accurate, is an invaluable asset to every person.

Efficiency calls for word accuracy especially in business, in legal practice, and in professional life generally. To use words carelessly in the conduct of the serious affairs of the world, may prove a costly fault. Many mistakes and misunderstandings are traceable to inexactness in the choice of words. Embarrassing situations in social circles are likewise often caused by unhappily chosen language. There is great need, therefore, to train pupils to watch carefully their speech.

Such training may well begin early. With little folk the work must not be formalized. Much tactful help may be given in leading even primary pupils to exercise care in their speech. In connection with reading, spelling, and language in particular, many opportunities will arise for the teacher to exercise a guiding influence on the pupil's choice of words. Every subject, indeed, will give some chance to help him here.

In the upper grades this work for word accuracy may be more direct. If occasional periods were given to it, time would be saved. Success in the study of any subject is largely dependent on ability to master the words

through which the subject is expressed. Sureness of expression is promoted greatly by such a mastery.

There is an especial need to clear the common speech of inaccuracy in the choice of words. The practice of using "the right word in the wrong place" needs particularly to be overcome. A careful study of the meaning of **nice, grand, gorgeous, delicious, swell, awful, fierce, dandy,** with many other like expressions commonly misused, would prove helpful in preventing slang.

Such a study should have a good effect to check the tendency towards word exaggeration and talking in superlatives. "Didn't we have a delicious time?" "Wasn't her dress darling?" "Did you think so? I thought it was crazy." These sentences, caught in passing a group of high school students, are typical illustrations of the fault.

There is no cause for alarm over this common tendency to use words extravagantly. It is simply expressive of the enthusiastic spirit of youth. Something should be done, however, to keep the habit from fixing itself. A series of sensible exercises keeping the spirit alive but turning the tendency to educative account would prove a valuable training in word accuracy.

There is need also for a careful study of certain words that are likely to be wrongly used, one for the other. Following are a few of these trouble makers.

accept—except	learn—teach
affect—effect	leave—let
allusion—illusion	less—fewer
already—all ready	liable—likely
altogether—all together	lose—loose
brothers—brethren	practical—practicable

can—may	principal—principle
emigrate—immigrate	respectfully—respectively
healthy—healthful	stationary—stationery
hygienic—sanitary	stature—statue

The exact meaning of each of the foregoing words and of others that are likely to be interchanged should be learned and their right use fixed by practice.

The "dictionary habit" should be cultivated as soon as the pupil is able to use the dictionary intelligently. Here again, caution should be exercised. Dictionary work is often made so repellent that pupils are trained to despise the sight of this useful tool of learning. The dictionary should be made not a hindrance, but a help to the pupil's word progress. It may be made to serve an excellent purpose if it is used to supplement the pupil's efforts in learning words.

The learner should be trained to an independent study of words. Pupils should go to the dictionary only when unable to think out the meaning for themselves. The meaning of words may often be found without dictionary help.

There are two main ways by which word definitions may be discovered: 1. From the context; 2. From the construction. Pupils, trained to study words from both these viewpoints, are schooled in word watchfulness. They become to a certain extent dictionary makers themselves, and are therefore better able to appreciate the dictionary when they must turn to it for help in sharpening their definitions.

To give these points practical application, the following illustrations are offered:

A fifth grade was studying "Hiawatha." The class had come to these lines:

> "From the mountains, moors and fenlands,
> Where the heron, the shuh-shuh-gah,
> Feeds among the reeds and rushes."

The pupils were puzzled. They did not know the meaning of **moors, fenlands,** and **shuh-shuh-gah.** It would have been comparatively easy to turn to the dictionary, and let it do the word thinking for them; but the teacher followed a different method. With a few questions he led the class to make a study of the context. **Shuh-shuh-gah,** it was quickly discovered, is simply the Indian name for **heron.** The heron lived in the **fenlands.** What kind of lands are they? Lands where the reeds and rushes grow. The meaning of **moors** likewise was partly determined as neither fenlands nor mountains; but its exact meaning was not yielded by a study of the context. To give it a sharper definition, the pupils were permitted to look up the word in the dictionary. They went to the book eager to check up their own thinking.

Another kind of word study which may be made most interesting is the learning of word meanings from their structure. This applies especially to our words of Latin origin, of which there are many in our language. To work out the definition of these generally longer words, to reduce them to their simplest terms, is a kind of language game that may be made most profitable in promoting word accuracy.

To illustrate: Take the word **context.** How is it constructed? The stem or root **text** and the prefix **con**

make the word. What does **text** mean? In what other words is the stem found? A list of words containing it may readily be given—**texture, textile, textbook.** From these the essence of the meaning of the stem **text** may be discovered. The dictionary will supplement this study by giving the exact definition and derivation of the word from the old Latin word **texere**—"to weave together."

Following this the definition of **con** may easily be found. A large family of words in which this prefix is used—**confederate, congenial, contained, considerate, conduct, contiguous,** and many others may be named by the pupils. **Con,** as will be quickly discovered from a study of this group of words, means **with.** These two elements added give the definition.

A study of etymology is an essential part of vocabulary building. It connects closely with reading, spelling, and language; and it may be given, not formally, but informally rather early in the grades.

Such a study of words has great value in various lines of work. It is of great help to the pupil in understanding scientific and mathematical terms; it is a valuable asset also in geography, history, and other subjects. Especially does it give great assistance in the study of languages that link with our own.

A practical study of the history of our mother tongue is much to be desired. It would bring not only word appreciation, but greater care in the choice of words. Pupils need to know how our language acquired its Saxon strength and its French finish. They should learn, too, more of Latin, the great mother tongue to which we are indebted for so many useful words. The

contributions of other languages to our own speech should not be forgotten, for practically every tongue has contributed to its riches.

There is more than mere word study in this great story of the making of our American speech. Within it is the romance of the struggle for freedom. And the romance is not yet finished. Even now, in this mighty melting pot of ours, the languages of all the world are being gradually brought together into one common speech, which may yet develop into a world tongue.

QUESTIONS

1. Explain and illustrate with instances from real life the meaning of this assertion: "Inaccuracy in the use of words is a common fault and sometimes a costly one."
2. Give five words that you have observed to be most commonly used inaccurately; as, **nice.**
3. When and how can the "dictionary habit" be best developed in pupils? In what way may the dictionary become a help rather than a hindrance to the word learner?
4. What phase of Latin is of especial value in helping the pupil to be accurate in his choice of words?
5. What helps to word accuracy are available to every one?
6. Explain briefly and illustrate what is meant by the expression, "Saxon strength and French finish," as applied to our language.

EXERCISES

1. Have a round table study of common stems, prefixes, suffixes—the meanings and right use of which every one should know. Let each member of the group bring five of each. See how large a word list can be worked out from this collection of vocabulary material.
2. Let each member of the class choose some brief selection,

a paragraph or short poem, which illustrates a skillful choice of words. Be ready to read in class and point out the especially well chosen words.

3. Copy from current addresses or news articles or advertisements ten expressions wherein striking words have been used with accuracy. What advantage is gained by an apt and accurate use of each?

WORD APPRECIATION

Word appreciation means all that is implied by word accuracy, and more. An artist in words chooses these subtle symbols of thought and emotion with due regard both to their definition and to their suggestion. He makes sure that they convey both the right meaning and the right feeling.

Words, as every one can attest, have the power to hurt or to heal. They may sting like a whip, or soothe like a mother's touch. They carry a certain spirit or atmosphere of their own through which a given emotional effect may be produced on the hearer or reader. In this lies their power to stimulate thought and feeling, to stir men to action.

Within this individual spirit of the word is to be found its life-giving qualities. Not so much what the word actually says as the feeling it radiates, counts for the most. For example, take these two sentences: The man lived in a **cottage.** The man lived in a **hovel. Hovel** and **cottage** mean, in a general sense, **house;** yet what a different picture each suggests!

No two words are exactly synonymous. Each has a certain individuality which gives it character and vitality. The words **zephyr, breeze, gale, blast, tempest, tornado,** all have a common meaning in **wind;** but no two of them suggest the same kind of wind. Likewise, **stroll, stride, march, limp, stagger, trudge,**

all imply **walk.** The mental image brought by each of these expressions is markedly different from that brought by any of the others.

Our language is so rich in words as to have an appropriate expression for practically every shade of thought and feeling. To be able to call up quickly and to place deftly the fitting expression is to use words with artistic skill. It is a skill worth acquiring both from the cultural and the practical viewpoints.

The author and the orator are keen at discerning the spiritual quality of words. In their best writings and speeches they reveal a word insight, a fine sense of selection in language, which makes greatly for the superior quality of their work. Observe, for instance, how aptly chosen are the distinctive words in these lines from famous poets:

In his *Elegy*, Gray pictures the tired worker thus:

> The plowman homeward **plods** his weary way.

In *The Last Leaf*, by Holmes, we are given this picture of the uncertain steps of age:

> Now he **totters** o'er the ground
> With his cane.

In *The Cotter's Saturday Night*, Burns brings thus vividly before us the beginning steps of children:

> The expectant wee-things **toddlin'** . . . run to meet their dad.

Note also with what deft touch the following word pictures are sketched by more recent writers.

"Other things leave me, but it abides; other things change, but it remains the same. For me its balmy airs are always blowing, its summer seas flashing in the sun; the pulsing of its surf beat is

in my ear. I can see its garlanded crags, its leaping cascades, its plumy palms drowsing by the shore, its remote summits floating like islands above the cloud rack. I can hear the plash of its brooks. In my nostrils still lives the breath of flowers that perished twenty years ago."—*Mark Twain.*

"In a few moments he found himself in a large gray car accompanied by four soldiers. The aviator left him. The country was barren and horrible, full of great pits and rents, and he could hear the roar of artillery and the shriek of shells. Overhead, aeroplanes were buzzing angrily. He seemed to be suddenly transported from the Kingdom of God to the pit of darkness." —*Stacy Aumonier* in *A Source of Irritation.*

Skill to find the fitting word is to be expected in the author and the orator. Such ability, however, is not to be limited to literary work. An exact use of language is very important in other professions, in business, in social affairs, and even in common conversation. Cultivated and courteous speech is of practical value everywhere.

There is a general need for the cultivation of a keener sense of word values. The common carelessness in speech, the crudities reflected in daily talk and in ordinary correspondence, add nothing to our general credit; and surely they are a handicap to any individual. A little attention to word art might help greatly in overcoming many prevalent language faults.

Language and literature may well be blended here. An appreciative study of the words of effective speakers and writers has double value. It stimulates literary appreciation and it enriches the learner's vocabulary with choice living expressions. Many inviting exercises, adaptable to both the elementary school and the high

school, may readily be made in connection with this work.

Finding author's words is one typical lesson which has the appeal of a language game. This exercise in a variety of forms may be easily prepared by selecting a paragraph, or a number of separate sentences wherein some distinctively well-chosen words occur. Omit one or more words and let the class try to supply the right expression.

For example, take the following line from Tennyson's *Sir Galahad:*

The streets were.....with snow.

Covered, robed, deep, white, blanketed, and other words are likely to be suggested in the effort to find the author's poetic word **dumb.**

Or take Barry Cornwall's effective line suggestive of the spirit of the lusty sailor:

But give to me the.....breeze.

A great variety of words may be chosen here: **Wild, blustering, biting, fierce,** and other expressions will probably be tried out by the pupils before the poet's word **snoring** is discovered.

The value of the exercise, however, consists not so much in the finding of the word as in the hunting for it. In the effort to discover the author's word, appreciation for his work is stimulated and the vocabulary is enriched by many choice usable expressions.

Literature is full of lines and paragraphs that lend themselves to this interesting work. As further examples take the following sentences. By omitting the

words in black type from these, a merry search may be stimulated with rich results in word finding and testing.

"Rip Van Winkle, however, was one of those happy mortals of foolish, **well-oiled** dispositions."—*Irving*.

"We minded that the sharpest ear
The buried brooklet could not hear,
The music of whose **liquid** lip
Had been to us companionship."—*Whittier*.

"The **husky,** rusty rustle of the tassels of the corn,
And the **raspin'** of their tangled leaves
As golden as the morn."—*Riley*.

Exercises in word study may be varied occasionally to advantage. The pupils will enjoy at times finding sentences themselves in which some happily chosen expression occurs. Each may be permitted to present his sentence to the class, omitting the distinctive word, and letting his classmates seek for it. At other times they may find a paragraph to read, and point out the words that are especially well chosen.

But, as insisted in the previous chapter, the mere finding of words of other people is not enough. **Artistic skill in the use of words comes only through persistent practice in selecting and using choice words to express one's own thought and feeling.** A study of the language of literature is indirectly helpful and stimulating. But the pupil learns to do, not merely by studying, but by studying and doing.

Another point to be kept in mind is this: **The apt, the expressive word responds most surely only to the call of sincere thought and feeling.** While the mind of the speaker or writer is thinking clearly the idea to be

expressed, while the picture to be portrayed is very vividly imaged in his mind, he is more likely to find the fitting word. The effective expression is most likely to leap to his tongue or pen, provided always it is in his vocabulary, when the mind is aglow with thought and feeling.

Vocabulary building, for this reason, is best done where it is carried on in connection with genuine self-expression. To make of this work an artificial process, as many teachers do, by requiring pupils to learn a given number of new words every day, is largely to defeat the purposes of the work. Compelling pupils to memorize authors' vocabularies is quite as bad. Pupils should be made to feel that they are learning words not for the sake of learning words, but for the sake of serviceable self-expression. **What every one needs is a good working vocabulary filled with expressions that are both choice and usable.**

Opportunities enough to connect vocabulary work with real life expression are constantly occurring. By a little tactful turning of the language lesson into the right channels, as already suggested, language may be made a delightful study aiming towards the development of the desire and the skill to use words with discrimination.

A vocabulary gained thus under the impulse of a true motive will be alive and lasting. Word art by such a teaching process is applied to practical, everyday service. Through it also may be developed literary appreciation and literary talent.

QUESTIONS

1. Why may the successful author be aptly called a word artist?

2. Show how every word has a shade or tint of meaning of its own. Give in illustration five or more words expressive of the general meaning carried by each of the following: **boy, house, wind, walk, play, said.**

3. Give two ways in which the effective writer or speaker may make his language picturesque and vivid without resorting to slang.

4. When is an author justified in coining a word? Name words so coined that have been generally accepted in good usage.

EXERCISES

1. What words in the following selection from Jack London are delightfully well chosen?

"Tethering his horse in the edge of the wood, he continued a hundred yards on foot till he came to the stream. Twenty feet wide it was, without perceptible current, cool and inviting, and he was very thirsty. But he waited inside his screen of leafage, his eyes fixed on the screen on the opposite side. To make the wait endurable, he sat down, his carbine resting on his knees. The minutes passed and slowly his tenseness relaxed. At last he decided there was no danger; but just as he prepared to part the bushes and bend down to the water, a movement among the opposite bushes caught his eye.

"It might be a bird. But he waited. Again there was an agitation of the bushes, and then, so suddenly that it almost startled a cry from him, the bushes parted and a face peered out. It was a face covered with several weeks' growth of ginger-colored beard. The eyes were blue and wide apart, with laughter wrinkles in the corners that showed despite the tired and anxious expression of the whole face."—*Jack London* in *War*.

2. Find in some standard book or magazine another short selection. Point out its choice words and tell why you think each word pointed out is aptly chosen.

3. From the writings or addresses of business and professional men and women select five passages which indicate that these leaders appreciate aptly chosen words and well coined expressions.

VIII

CULTIVATING THE SPIRIT OF AUTHORSHIP

To discover and to develop the latent literary ability of the learner—to turn this talent of the pupil to splendid service for himself and for the uplift of the community—is one of the finest results to come from the teaching of language.

CRITICS OR CREATORS

In the cultivation of the art of authorship lies one of the greatest opportunities for the language teacher. To discover the latent literary ability in pupils, to encourage it to express itself in fine forms for the pleasure and uplift of themselves and others, is the special duty given to the teacher of language. It is more than a duty—it is a special privilege and a splendid opportunity for practical service.

Have our schools generally appreciated this privilege or risen to its opportunities? In some measure, yes; but not to the fullness thereof, nor with the enthusiasm that the importance of this service demands. Our schools too often have been and are still so bounded by formalism that literary genius has not found in them room to grow. Teachers, sometimes held down by requirements imposed on them by those above, or else imposing their own formalistic training from habit or choice upon their pupils, have not given encouraging opportunity for the development of literary and other talents within the schoolroom.

The following incidents are illustrative of this failure. They are cited here with no thought whatever of discrediting the other excellent training that has come from our schools; but rather to emphasize the point that **our language work fails in its highest opportunity when it does not discover and develop the rare talents of the learners.**

When our troops were down on the Mexican Border there was among the leading representatives of the Associated Press a correspondent, who, when he was a student in one of our universities, failed to pass in English. He could not, or would not, take seriously to the formal work in that subject; but he was always finding time to scribble clever rhymes, sketches, and stories of all kinds for the school paper. Later, enlisting in the army, he participated in the Spanish-American War, and while doing service in the Philippines, he led in the establishment of the first American newspaper in those islands. After this experience he was employed by one of the most important American dailies, and gradually rose to his present position of prominence in the journalistic world.

Another instance came recently from an officer in our army, one of the most brilliant speakers and writers in the state he represents. A short time ago in response to a compliment paid to him at the close of a masterly address, he remarked, "Well, little credit is due to my college for whatever power I possess in that line. The English teachers there did their best to crush out every desire I ever had to express myself."

Another instance, which drives home the point from another angle, is to be found in the story of one of America's leading sculptors. When he was a boy in the grade schools, he was forever playing with mud, moulding from the common clay of his native town horses, Indians and other figures. Rebuked severely by his teacher one day because he carried some of these mud images into the schoolroom, he went home broken-

hearted. His mother, comforting him, told him to go ahead and make all the horses and Indians that he desired. To-day that boy's statues of horses and Indians and other splendid works of sculpture are scattered from Boston to San Francisco. One of them is among the fourteen famous statues around the balcony in the dome of the Congressional Library at Washington.

The incident is suggestive of the general attitude of many teachers in times past towards the creative spirit. **Artists and authors have generally developed, not because of encouragement from our formalized school systems, but in spite of it.**

In an article which appeared in the New York Times in August, 1916, Mr. W. W. Ellsworth, for thirty-seven years president of the Century Publishing Company, is quoted as saying that our schools have tended to develop a critical rather than a creative spirit, and that most of our authors have been produced outside of college.

In proof of the assertion he calls attention to the list of leading American writers, presented in a brief Chronology by an eminent literary critic. Fifty-nine of these literary celebrities are there named. Thirty-one of these were not college students. Many of the others who did attend college, it is pointed out, were there for only a brief time, or were graduated while very young. Among the non-collegians are the following: Frances Hodgson Burnett, Henry James, Mark Twain, Frank R. Stockton, H. C. Bunner, Joel Chandler Harris, John Burroughs, William Dean Howells, Mary E. Wilkins Freeman, James Whitcomb Riley, George Washington Cable, Bret Harte.

Admitting, for the sake of fairness, that these instances are taken from the days gone by, that the promise of the present is far more encouraging, these questions are yet pertinent: **Is our teaching even now developing critics or creators?** How much effort is turned to constructive, productive work? How much attention is given to developing the literary resources of our country by discovering the literary talent and encouraging it to express itself in literary service?

Here is no thought to discredit the necessary formal and technical work. These phases of language training must be given; and they will of necessity be given in cultivating the spirit of authorship—given much better than without it — for the pupil working under the stimulus of the creative spirit will be keen to perfect his own language and keep it clear of error.

The spirit of authorship is not limited to writers of literature. It expresses itself in every other kind of language service. It is shown whenever any person takes a proper pride in his speech and tries to use it effectively. A well constructed, convincing business letter, a fetching advertisement, a vividly written news item, a chatty, life-like friendly letter, a charming bit of conversation, a well told incident, or a clear-cut explanation—all reveal the spirit of authorship just as do the story, the oration, the lyric, or the drama.

Creative ability in speech or in writing is the finest result to come from the teaching of the mother tongue. Cultivating in the pupil the spirit of authorship—which not only carries with it the desire to use choice and effective language, but blossoms out constantly in

artistic literary forms—is the crest to be kept constantly in view in composition work.

The gardener cultivates the rose bush that the rose may finally burst into beauty. The orchardist works with the tree, cultivating and pruning and protecting it, in order that the peach or apple or orange may round out into its perfect form. If the teaching of language does not likewise blossom or come to its choicest fruitage in form of song and speech and story, it has failed to bring forth the richest returns.

This is not to insist that every pupil must become a poet or an orator. But it is to insist that one of the chief purposes of the language lesson is to cultivate the creative spirit in all pupils. Not every child who is taught music in our public schools becomes a great musician, nor will every pupil who is given opportunity to sketch or paint become an artist. The training, however, raises our appreciation of art and music in general; and through it the painters and musicians, who are to inspire us, may be discovered and developed. So too should the language lesson, offering the child an opportunity to express his thoughts and feelings in beautiful form, discover and direct to practical and inspirational ends the latent literary powers of the pupils.

This world of ours is starving to-day more for poetry than for potatoes. Those who think always in terms of things material are likely to forget that "Man cannot live by bread alone." There is something greater in life than the almighty dollar; and that something is an almighty ideal. Food is fundamental, of course; but

life without those things that sustain and satisfy the soul of man is mere animal existence. The so-called dreamers of the race—the poets, the musicians, the artists, the teachers of true religion—are all ministering in a most practical way to the spiritual needs of man.

The art of creating literature is indeed one of the most useful of all arts. Practical minded people are often so impractical as not to appreciate this point; but it is true nevertheless. Not only from the viewpoint of its spiritual values, but measured in terms of money, the literature of our country is one of its most valuable possessions. How much wealth has Irving, for example, brought to New York; or Longfellow to Boston; or Riley to Indiana? It seems almost a sacrilege to suggest such a computation of the worth of such men of genius; but perhaps the suggestion may stimulate greater attention to the development of our literary resources.

A few years since, in the Panama Exposition at San Francisco, there was a unique exhibit. The Indiana building was filled, not with products from her farms, nor her mines, nor her manufactories; but with the works of her writers. Arranged in fine display was the wealth of poems, stories, and other literary gems that have been produced by Riley, Lew Wallace, Booth Tarkington, Gene Stratton Porter, George Ade, and other authors who have not only brought riches and fame to the "Hoosier" state, but who have radiated wit and wisdom and wholesome recreation everywhere. It was a striking and deserved recognition of the worth of such work to the commonwealth.

No state will ever become great so long as it measures itself by mere material standards. Its pride should be not alone in the products of its fields, its ranches, its mines and its mills, but also in the products of the mind and spirit of its people. The lasting things of life are to be found in art and literature. Herein lies the glory of Greece, of Italy, of Spain, of the Hebrews, of England, and of our own America.

It is the work of the author both to interpret and to preserve the ideals of his people. It is a most important duty of the schools to discover and to encourage the spirit of authorship. In so doing the school can best serve its own educative purposes and at the same time turn that inherent desire of the literary mind to practical and cultural account.

Every locality has its literary raw materials. Every class possesses latent literary talents. If the effort now misdirected in our English classes towards memorizing dying dogmas of speech, were directed towards working up these materials into literary forms, the result would be a mighty stimulus to the creative powers of pupils, and the development of a wealth of poetry and prose to inspire and to enrich the lives of the people.

QUESTIONS

1. Why is the cultivation of skill in authorship essential to promote the progress of any community?
2. Account for the general tendency in our schools to develop critical rather than creative ability in language.
3. What two most valuable results would come to all pupils from giving constructive and creative language work its due attention in our schools?

4. How does the spirit of authorship make easier the teaching of the formal side of language?

5. To what extent should the creative spirit be stimulated in each pupil?

EXERCISES

1. Interview some successful writer or speaker you know as to his or her experiences in gaining skill in language. Be ready to report the findings and join your associates, who will interview others, in making a summary of the points that seem most helpful for guidance in language work in the schools.

2. State the advantages and the limitations of each of the following as means of promoting the spirit of authorship:

(a) Story Hour Clubs; (b) School Papers; (c) Holiday Programs; (d) Literary Recitals; (e) Plays and Pageants.

3. Show how the creative spirit finds practical expression in the daily life uses of language; as in advertising, in journalistic work, in correspondence, in moving pictures.

CREATING STORIES

The created story is one of our main sources of entertainment. In the form of fiction, the drama, and the moving picture especially, it is daily claiming the attention of millions of people. There is perhaps no other art more influential in shaping the lives of men than the art of story-telling. It is of vital importance that this influence be guided for good. Therein lies a great educational opportunity.

To train pupils in the art of creating stories, is to perform a doubly valuable service. It is at once to promote all of the purposes of language training, and to give an uplift to the recreation of the school and the community. More than this, it is a means of discovering and developing the latent literary talent in the pupils.

The story offers the best kind of all-round practice in cultivating language skill. Into its structure is woven every type of composition—narration, description, explanation, conversation, and even argumentation. To acquire skill in story-telling, is, therefore, to lay the foundation for effectiveness in all lines of language expression.

Story-telling offers an especially inviting kind of language work. Every one likes to hear a good story well told. Most people enjoy telling stories. Children, in particular, get great enjoyment both from hearing and from telling tales. For this reason story-telling

lends itself readily to the language lesson, so readily that it often is given too much of the time.

Especially has the practice of reproducing stories been much abused. There is some value in this sort of work, but it may easily be overdone; and the truer training that makes for spontaneous, original self-expression may be neglected.

The best training in the art of story-telling comes from creating original stories. To practice shaping close-to-life, near-by materials into story form with a view to reaching real people, is to cultivate skill to tell a story effectively. Such practice is more vital than that of the imitative sort.

Our most successful story writers acquired their skill by no second-hand practice. Undoubtedly they were inspired by reading the masters and through the study of the work of others they were stimulated and helped in developing their art. But their efforts were aimed not at imitating but at creating stories of their own planning and weaving, using for this purpose the literary raw materials selected from real life.

As a boy, Scott was forever gathering the folk tales of the Scottish borderland. Irving was always wandering about the haunts where charming stories hide. Mark Twain wove into his *Tom Sawyer*, *Huckleberry Finn*, and *Pudd'nhead Wilson*, the rich experiences of his earlier years along the Mississippi. Dickens created his *David Copperfield*, *Nicholas Nickleby*, *Oliver Twist*, and other tales out of the wealth of his literary gatherings from among the English folk. Hawthorne, Bret Harte, Kipling, Stevenson—all

great story writers indeed— have produced their masterpieces out of the common story stuff they found about them. Into the warp set by their own planning they wove a woof selected from the story-making materials that are constantly being spun in the realms of human nature. If our schools would cultivate the art of creating stories, they must follow the methods of the masters.

The art of story-telling is based on skill to select right materials and to shape the story. In other words, to become an effective story-teller, one must learn first how to find the choice story; and second how to tell it well, or rather help it tell itself. All of this may sound simple enough; but it takes much rightly directed practice to develop such skill.

There are three main sources of original story material. 1. The common folk tales, carried usually in the memories of the older people; 2. Everyday human interest happenings, such as are discovered and reported through the papers and magazines; 3. The learner's own personal experiences. All of these are within ready reach of the schoolroom.

Many a charming tale may be found lingering in the lives of the aged. The grandfather and grandmother stories of the fireside, and the yarns of village story-tellers, or historic characters of the neighborhood, sometimes are rich in story stuff of rare qualities. Such material is close-to-life and full of human interest touches.

Stimulate such people to talk, and then listen to their tales. Most of what they may say will sound

commonplace, but wait. Out of their reminiscences may suddenly spring incidents of thrilling interest. The one telling the tale perhaps will not recognize it as anything unusual—which but makes it the more natural and charming.

Gathering and giving these original stories make lessons of many-sided value. Through such work democratic language lessons of the best kind may easily be developed. Each pupil may be given a chance to contribute to the information and enjoyment of the class in an oral story hour. Through the written work which naturally follows, these stories can be put into form to be preserved. A collection of local history tales may thus be gathered.

Teachers themselves will profit greatly by such lessons. For them to learn the stories that are dear to the people they serve, is to help them the better to serve that community. An appreciative study of the local history by the teacher and pupils is one of the best means of promoting a good working relationship between the school and the home.

Another source of excellent materials for story hours, school newspapers, and other language training exercises is **the living present.** The heroes do not all belong to the "good old days." Many of them are to be found still living, as the terrible World War has amply demonstrated. In the throbbing activities of everyday life, heroic scenes of the finest kind are constantly being enacted. Many hero stories are never brought to light; but frequently they are reported by appreciative news writers, who reveal them in the daily press and in

magazines. The schools would do well to join in this search for "live stories," and use them for giving the pupils initial training in the practical art of news-story writing.

The third source of original stories, closer to the learner's life, is his own experience. This affords excellent materials for every day expression. Through relating the most interesting happening in his own life the pupil may be given constant practice in speaking and in writing his own thoughts. There is a treble value in such exercises: They give the pupil vitalized training in the use of speech. They enhance his appreciation of his own life experiences. They give him a chance to serve others by sharing with them the best that life brings to him. For these reasons, this sort of work is being used as the main basis for the best language lessons.

Exercises that make for serviceable self-expression may be easily worked out in connection with all of the original story materials suggested. Through story hours, manuscript papers and magazines produced by the pupils, special programs prepared for other classes and for various occasions, this work may be given special motivation.

Many of the stories may also find a welcome in the public press. In one mining camp, for example, the local paper gladly gave several pages of space for each of several issues to publish the local history stories gathered by the seventh grade pupils.

The daily practice that must be given in the class cannot always have such special motivation. It must be stimulated by less ostentatious means; the

class itself for the most part, must be its own audience. It becomes a real audience with true inspiration, if this work is promoted in the true spirit of the democratic recitation.

The essential thing to keep in mind is this: To develop skill in story-telling, the pupils must be given opportunity to select stories that have an appeal to the common heart, and to tell these tales for the uplift and enjoyment of others.

QUESTIONS

1. Why is the art of story-telling of great practical importance from both the educational and the recreational view points?

2. Explain fully this statement: Practice in shaping close-to-life, near-by materials into story form with a view to reach present-day people, is the best way to develop ability in story telling. Be ready to give in proof the training experience of some successful story writer.

3. What are three essential qualities of the choice tales of all ages? How may the choice old-time tales be used advantageously in cultivating the art of story-telling?

4. What three-fold value is there in having pupils gather local history stories to use in language work?

5. How best can the school exercise an influence to check wrong tendencies in story-telling and train the tastes of children aright?

EXERCISES

1. Have a story hour in your class. Let each member bring some choice tale—an original one, discovered among the common folk or experienced by the teller. Share these stories. Join in helping one another to tell them well.

2. Have a round table discussion on, "The Best Stories of Current Interest." Let each sketch some choice story as played in the moving pictures, on the stage, or as told in recent fiction. What in the tale made it worth while to you?

CREATING PLAYS

Many folk think there is already too much play in the schoolroom. And so there is—purposeless play. But educative play, play that really counts, is not overdone; nor are the educational possibilities of purposeful play generally appreciated.

Dramatization is one of the best means of inspiriting and motivating school work. The dramatic instinct is strong in human nature. To the young person especially is it an impelling force. The child's world is largely a world of make-believe activities. Children are constantly learning out of school in the spirit of play. Why should not their work within the school be infused more with the same natural play spirit?

Our schools are greatly lacking the true joy element. Real joy comes out of work that is infused with the spirit of play. Too many classrooms are wanting in such a spirit. The work is done constantly with a feeling of compulsion. It may be well done; but it might be done just as well, and certainly more happily, if the hearts of the workers were made happy in the doing of it. One may jolt along over a difficult road in a wagon or automobile without springs; but it is far more pleasant if springs are provided.

The joy element is a kind of shock-absorber in schoolroom work. If pupils fail to get joy out of their lessons they are more likely to make up for the loss by annoy-

ing the teacher, or by riotous fun outside. It would seem of vital importance that a spirit of enjoyment be brought into the work. One way of doing this is through creating plays occasionally to add zest to the work.

To illustrate plainly how this suggestion may work out in connection with different studies, brief sketches of exercises that have been carried out in actual schoolroom practice are here given.

A certain sixth grade class had been studying the geography of South America. When the pupils were dealing with the subject of food products, some one suggested that the class have a dinner entirely of foods that had come from South America. The suggestion was enthusiastically received and the plan was carried out. A few days later the principal and other guests were invited to this grade room. There was a tempting dinner spread. The waitresses were dressed in South American costumes. While the dinner was being served, the guests were entertained with South American songs and speeches suggesting the spirit of that land. The exercise proved to be a most delightful geography and language lesson, and at the same time it was rich in recreation.

A fourth grade in another school **blended language and geography and history in a delightful way** by creating a little play or pageant called "America, the Land of all Nations." In this Uncle Sam and Aunt Columbia, as the children were pleased to call her, entertained the various little folk of other lands that make up our great American family. Each pupil,

dressed in inexpensive costume to represent some particular country, introduced himself or herself by giving a bit of clever verse or prose suggestive of the spirit and customs of that land. Composite songs expressive of loyalty to the land of liberty were created by the pupils and sung by them with zest. The following is a refrain from one of these:

"Dear old Uncle Sam,
We will stand for you
And for Aunt Columbia
And the old red, white, and blue."

Another school, near an Indian reservation, in gathering local history stories, found one of unusual dramatic interest. It was used as the basis of a historical play, worked out through a series of language lessons into finished form, and finally played before the whole community. The money taken for this performance was used for the purpose of a school library. This represents truly serviceable self-expression from the historical, recreational, and economic viewpoints.

Three main elements are necessary in developing a successful play: 1. An interesting situation; 2. A variety of characters; 3. Action that holds the attention. These essential characteristics were recently summed up in high-school style, by an eighth grade boy when he said, "I like a play that has 'something doing,' and real people, and I don't want the hero to have things too easy."

The same qualities that make a gripping story characterize the play. A play, indeed, is but an acted or vivified story. Herein lies the value in dramatizing

stories as an aid in teaching literature. When pupils are given opportunity to act the story, it becomes a vivid reality to them.

At one time a class was studying Rip Van Winkle. The pupils, somewhat baffled by Irving's wealth of words, were not warming to a proper interest in the story. It was suggested that they dramatize it. Immediately the work took on new life. When they began to visualize the tale in acts and scenes, it became a living thing. The word difficulties speedily disappeared and the drama was worked out and played with enthusiasm.

Creating plays is a delightful means to an end. Such exercises should be wisely used, of course; but they might be more often employed than they are as an impelling method in teaching different subjects.

The following are some of the important returns to come from this pleasure-giving practice of dramatization:

1. It adds the joy-element to learning.
2. It promotes ease and poise in pupils.
3. It offers excellent oral practice.
4. It impresses a great many lessons.
5. It cultivates the spirit of authorship.
6. It helps the child to create his own recreation—and thereby makes a real contribution to his life.

QUESTIONS

1. Give two convincing reasons why the schools should exercise a more profound influence in guiding the dramatic instincts of children.
2. Show the value, both from a recreational and from an

educational standpoint, of leading children to create and to act their stories.

3. How can creative dramatic work be made to inspirit the teaching of geography, history, science, and literature? Illustrate by telling of a play you have seen successfully produced.

4. How can the opportunity for creating plays be increased and at the same time the load of the teacher be lightened?

5. Discuss fully each of the essential elements of a good play. What are the educational returns to come from well directed dramatization in school work?

6. What are the necessary steps in creating a composite play?

EXERCISES

1. Make a collection of stories that are excellent for dramatization. Select one and tell how it might be played.

2. Make a brief, suggestive outline for a play that might be created in connection with geography, history, literature, or some other subject. Adapt the plan to some grade you may be teaching. Be ready to report the results.

THE POET'S ART

"We'll sing Auld Coila's plains an' fells,
Her moors red-brown wi' heather bells,
Her banks an' braes, her dens an' dells."

"We'll gar our streams an' burnies shine
Up wi' the best."

In these lines to a fellow poet, Burns suggests one of the many fine services the poet may perform for his country. His work is to create songs that open the eyes of people to the natural beauties about them, to help them hear the babbling brooks and the songs of the birds, to see the hills and vales in a new light, to interpret life about them. More than this, the true poet is the voice of humanity speaking the great common heart, the soul of mankind, in ringing words that echo through the corridors of time.

Such a service Burns himself performed when he wrote:

"The rank is but the guinea's stamp,
The man's the gold for a' that."

Such a service was done for the world when Colonel John McCrae recently out of the thickening gloom of the war clouds sent this lightning flash of inspiration:

IN FLANDERS FIELDS

"In Flanders Fields the poppies grow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky

The larks, still bravely singing, fly,
Scarce heard amid the guns below.
We are the dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders Fields.

"Take up our quarrel with the foe!
To you, from failing hands, we throw
The torch. Be yours to lift it high!
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies blow
In Flanders Fields."

It is impossible to measure the worth of such service. None can compute the length nor breadth nor depth of the influence of such poems. Think in this connection of *The Battle Hymn of the Republic*, *The Marseillaise*, *The Star-Spangled Banner*, and hundreds of others that have leaped like the clear notes of a bugle call to stir the soul of ennobling action.

Could the recent World War have been won by the forces of freedom without such help? Can you conceive what this world would be without the songs and the other inspiring poems that have been created to cheer and strengthen humanity along the struggling way? Is it not a really practical service the poet performs? Is he appreciated by so-called practical minded people? Have our schools always taken the right attitude towards his work? Have they risen to their privilege of cultivating the art of poetry?

"But poets are born, not made," objects some one. It is certain that poets will not be made by the ordinary process of language teaching. So long as teachers and

texts make language lessons merely reproductive, imitative, and informational, instead of giving the pupil ample opportunity to express his own life through constructive and creative work, so long may we expect no poets to be developed nor even discovered in our schools.

Nor will the highest results come from the language work until the spirit of poetry is discovered and developed. That spirit is in the heart of every pupil. Not all have the gift to express it with artistic skill in their own words; but the response that may be stirred in every soul by true poetry proves the presence of the poetic spirit in every soul.

It is the teacher's privilege to cultivate that spirit in the pupils. No better way offers than to assure them their divine right to express themselves in the form of musically beautiful words. To lead them in creating a rhythmic expression of their true thoughts and feelings is to give language lessons of the most delightful and valuable kind.

But how can pupils be stimulated to write verse? By what methods may they best be led to create rhymes or poems spontaneously expressive of their own thoughts and feelings? "I have never written a line of poetry in my life. How can I lead others to do it?" the teacher asks conscientiously.

The essential thing first is for the teacher to cultivate more faith in herself and in her children. This may easily be done if the pupils are given an inviting opportunity to participate in the delightful exercise of verse making.

Creative Verse Work. A subject close to child life, a few suggestive questions, and a little sympathetic guidance of the pupil's efforts, are the main things necessary to lead children to create rhymes, jingles, or even verse with the true poetic touch.

A sketch of a real lesson, given recently in a certain fourth grade, will serve to illuminate these facts and point a way to get results.

Birds of Springtime was the subject chosen. After a few minutes of interesting discussion in which the children told various things they had observed about the springtime birds, the teacher asked:

"Of all the birds that bring the spring, which do you like best?"

"The bluebird," "the meadow lark," "the robin," came the various replies.

"Why do you like the bluebird best, Jane?"

"Because it has the prettiest dress."

"Yes, its dress is certainly dainty. Why do you prefer the meadow lark, Tom?"

"Because it can sing the best."

"We all like to hear the meadow lark's song, I am sure. Why is the robin your favorite, Hazel?"

"Oh, he is such a cheery bird."

"Very true. You are not the only one who likes the merry robin. I know a lady who loved him so much that she wrote a poem about him.

"You would like to hear it? Well, you may, but not just now; I have something else for you to enjoy to-day. Why not make a poem of our own about the birds we like best?

"You don't know how? You can surely learn. Suppose we all try together a rhyme about the robin. What sort of a bird is our little red-breasted friend?"

"Cheery," "sunny," "gayly dressed," "jolly."

"Very well, suggest a line that describes him."

"The robin is a cheery bird."

"That goes fairly well, but can we not find another word than **'bird'**? **'Chap,'** says Tom; let us try it: **'The robin is a cheery chap.'** That sounds rather robin-like, doesn't it? Now tell something else about this **'cheery chap.'** "

"He has a nice red dress."

"Yes; but **'chaps'** don't wear dresses, do they? **'Vest,'** you say? That goes better."

"Now find another word instead of **'nice.'** "

"Gay."

"Very well, **'He wears a gay red vest.'** What else might we say of this fine fellow?"

"He eats ripe cherries."

"Indeed he does. They make what for him?"

"A juicy feast."

"Certainly. Why not change our line to say that? **'He feasts on juicy cherries.'** "

"That almost makes our robin rhyme; but we need another line. What shall it be?

'The robin is a cheery chap,
He wears a gay red vest,
He feasts on juicy cherries,—'

"What more can we say?"

"And he makes a nice warm nest."

"That is a jingle, to be sure. We might make a

better one; but each of you would rather try to make one of his own. What bird will you choose?"

The sparrow, the jolly old crow, the eagle, the meadow lark, the humming bird. These and other birds were named. Paper was passed and the children began to work joyfully, while the teacher, moving about among them, gave helpful suggestions here and there as needed. It was not many minutes until several had stanzas ready to read.

Most of the returns were commonplace jingles, but from the efforts came a number of clever rhymes, and two or three of the pupils produced some rather artistic verse.

The creating of composite verse, just illustrated, is only one of several ways to begin this work with children. Another good beginning is to give suggestive lines and have the children complete the stanza, as:

Jack was a jolly old pumpkin
With eyes————————

From this rhythmic lead, one fourth grade boy made the following:

"Jack was a jolly old pumpkin,
With eyes that held much light,
He had a great big crooked mouth
And a head that was empty quite."

Still another good way to begin verse work is through the finding of words that rhyme, or through words expressive of the spirit of the subject at hand. For illustration, in stimulating the children to write poems about brooks, one sixth grade teacher created the atmosphere for the lesson by having the children give

all the words they could find expressive of sounds and movements of water. Rhythmic lines were made using these words, and the pupils then created verses of their own. One of the most artistic results of this exercise was this little poem written by a sixth grade pupil:

THE MOUNTAIN BROOK

"I float and I splash forever,
I never get tired of play.
I babble and leap o'er the pebbles,
Throughout the sunny day.

On my banks the violets hover,
Just to catch one sparkling drop
Of my water, that shines like silver,
As I flow and I never stop."

A subject that touches vitally the interests of all the class should be chosen. Subjects will vary somewhat with different communities. Country children are likely to respond more readily with songs about the birds, the brooks, the flowers, and the fields. The city child may succeed best in producing poems that reflect the firemen at work, the parks, the busy street. Yet this is not necessarily so. In our land, city and country life are so closely blended that any subject of natural appeal has general interest. All normal children are ready to express themselves about their plays, the holidays, or about nature and the human activities either of city or of country. Fetching subjects for lessons in verse-making are everywhere to be found if the teacher will but open her eyes.

For the most part verse work should not be given below the fourth grade, although third or even second

grade children have been led to create simple little rhymes, mainly in form of composite verse.

"Should the teacher first give the child any technical training in rhyme, meter or the other mechanics of poetry?" is a question frequently asked. The children of the grades would be hindered rather than helped by such formal work. Most children have natural music enough in their souls to keep their rhythmic expression true. If they do not, the best way to cultivate their musical sense is, not by any mechanical method, but by giving them the opportunity to try to express their thoughts and feelings in musical lines.

The effort should be always to keep this expression spontaneous, free, child-like. The following are delightful examples of such spontaneity:

"I love my home,
And I love my brother
But best of all
I appreciate my mother."
—*Fourth Grade Pupil.*

"Down by the schoolhouse is a brook,
It ripples out of every nook;
Here's the boys' swimming hole,
There's a boy with a fishing pole.
Down in the muddy bog,
The girls are trying to catch a polliwog.
When the teacher rings the bell,
To the brook they say, 'Farewell'."
—*Harvey Niell*, Fourth Grade.

"Let the boy go romp and play,
Along the creek, and fish all day,
Let him wander far away,

You don't need him anyway.
He'll learn more there by the pool
Than Johnnie will inside the school."
—*Harold Murrell*, Sixth Grade.

"Will you come to my house
On 'Witches Night'
When over the hill
The moon shines bright;
There'll be ghosts and goblins on left and right
Who'll scare you to death if you don't take flight?"
—*Virginia Mulholland*, Sixth Grade.

Children should be led in verse-making, as in all other language exercises, to express themselves, not some one else. Encourage them to try their own wings. They may make queer poetic tumbles at times; but only by being given the chance to fly freely will they learn finally to fly effectively. Occasionally some young poet will soar to heights such as this little poem reaches:

AN EVENING IN THE FOREST

"It is evening in the forest,
And the song birds all are still,
Though you hear the plaintive calling
Of the lonely whip-poor-will.

The blue mist rises slowly
From behind the towering trees,
And through the evening quiet
There comes a gentle breeze.

The slender crescent moon,
Gleaming through the pine-tops high,
Sheds its faintly golden moonbeams
Down a pathway from the sky.

The golden stars are twinkling,
Each leaflet close is furled,
And the stream is softly murm'ring
A good night to the world."
—*Dorothy Patty*, Eighth Grade.

These selections will suffice to suggest the possibilities of encouraging creative verse in the common schools and give teachers a little encouragement to try this most delightful of language exercises with their pupils. More than mere fun will come from such lessons. They are an excellent means for enriching the child's vocabulary, and they stimulate greatly the spirit of authorship, so sadly wanting in most of our schools.

QUESTIONS

1. What is the double value to pupils of creative verse work?
2. How would you answer those who say in objection to such work that the school must train for practical things, not to make poets?
3. Make clear what is meant by "The Poet's Art."
4. Suggest five general subjects most likely to call forth poetic expression from pupils.
5. Suggest several good ways to start pupils to write verse and to guide them so that their expression will be kept spontaneous and original.

EXERCISES

1. Test your own verse-making ability by creating a lyric to express some sentiment or thought you feel strongly. Share it with your associates in class, for mutual help and suggestion.
2. Plan a lesson in creative verse-making and teach it in some class. Grade the poems according to this classification: best—medium—poorest. Your associates may do likewise. Join in a discussion of the results, dealing especially with these

points: (a) How many pupils in the class revealed "the poetic touch"? (b) What was the value of the exercise to all the class?

3. Collect ten good present day poems from the newspapers and magazines. On what themes are the best ones written? Which ones do the pupils enjoy most? Why?

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